

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH ALABAMA MAGAZINE

Meet the Men of
MANLY MONDAYS

CAROL BEHEL
is Alabama's Teacher of the Year

FOUR GENERATIONS
share their UNA story



**FOR ALUMNI AND
FRIENDS OF UNA**
FALL 2019 • VOLUME 27
NUMBER 2



UNIVERSITY OF
NORTH ALABAMA
MAGAZINE

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FOR ALUMNI AND
FRIENDS OF UNA
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SOAR 2019

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During the summer of 2019, the University of North Alabama hosted more incoming freshmen and their parents, as well as transfer students, as part of SOAR, or Summer Orientation and Advanced Registration, than it has in its history. It tells us that there are many more who are hearing us roar and who want to find their home in North Alabama with the Lions.

Speaking of telling our story, we're introducing a new feature in this issue of your *University of North Alabama Magazine* – una.edu/magazine. Here, you'll be able to find behind-the-scenes interviews and images, both still and video, not included in your printed edition. When you see this icon: be sure to go online and hear what it is we're roaring about.



UNIVERSITY OF NORTH ALABAMA

FALL 2019 • VOLUME 27 • No. 2 • FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS OF UNA

MAGAZINE

ADMINISTRATION

President
Kenneth D. Kitts

Vice President for Academic Affairs/Provost
Ross Alexander

*Vice President for
Business and Financial Affairs*
Evan Thornton '15

Vice President for Student Affairs
Kim Greenway '91

Vice President for University Advancement
Kevin Haslam

STAFF

PUBLISHER
Deborah L. Shaw '82

EDITOR
Michelle Eubanks '96

COPY EDITOR
B.J. Wilson '80

GRAPHIC DESIGNERS
Kali Daniel '16
Karen Hodges '84

STUDENT GRAPHIC DESIGNER
Sarah Yasaka

UNIVERSITY VIDEOGRAPHER/PHOTOGRAPHER
Leah Johnson

CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS
Bernie Delinski
Joseph Romans Photography
Shannon Wells '05

FEATURE WRITERS
Kali Daniel '16
Michelle Eubanks '96
Jeremy Henderson
Jeff Hodges '82
Deborah L. Shaw '82

QUESTIONS OR INQUIRIES:
256-765-4225

ADDRESS CHANGES AND ALUMNI UPDATES:
256-765-4201 or alumni1@una.edu

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Kenneth D. Kitts

Friends,

Fall is here! There is something magical about this time of the year. I love the beautiful crisp mornings, the colors of the trees as the leaves begin to change, and the annual homecoming celebration at the University of North Alabama. Have you seen the size of our homecoming parade and the number of people who line the streets for it? It's an incredible show, and it speaks to the deep love that our alumni and friends have for this wonderful and historic institution.

This is my fifth year as president, and Dena, Colin, Corbin, and I continue to be proud to call UNA our home. The location of the President's Home provides a unique vantage point from which to watch the campus come back to life for the new school year. We not only see it, but we hear it as well.

We hear work crews out early in the morning cleaning the fountain, sweeping walkways, and generally making sure this campus continues to sparkle. We hear laughter as students re-engage with one another. We hear shouts coming from the athletic practice field as our teams practice. We hear our marching band learning their show under the expert direction of Dr. Lloyd Jones. And, of course, we hear Leo and his sister, Una,

roar. Each of these sounds reminds us that UNA is home.

Inside this edition of *UNA Magazine*, you'll get to know some impressive and interesting people. Among them are alumna Carol Behel, Alabama's Teacher of the Year for 2019-20 (Roar Lions!), and new Vice President Kevin Haslam, who is leading our external engagement and fundraising efforts as head of the Division of Advancement. Kevin takes over for Dr. Debbie Shaw, who is retiring after three years of interim service. Debbie has contributed to UNA in so many ways – student, alumna, and, most recently, as a senior administrator – and I wish to take this opportunity to thank her publicly for her loyalty and dedication to her alma mater.

As we prepared to go to press with this magazine, we don't yet know the final enrollment tally for Fall 2019. However, I can tell you that all indicators point to another enrollment record with total headcount of approximately 7,800 students – up some 14 percent during the last five years.

Our current annual growth rate is strong. It is important that we continue to grow to enhance our financial position, but it is equally important that we shape our growth in a manner which protects



all that is special about UNA. We are committed to maintaining that balance.

Speaking of finances, Project 208 continues in full force for 2019-20. Our appropriation from the state increased more than nine percent from FY 19 to FY 20, a percentage increase that compares favorably with other universities in the state. However, our base allocation is so low that the percentage increase does not address the dollar deficit that has been growing for the last century. Of the two universities closest to us in size, one smaller and the other a little larger, we remain \$9 million to \$10 million below both in overall annual state support. *This must change.* The faculty, staff, and students of UNA are performing at a high level and doing everything asked of us by elected leaders. Our ability to continue to serve our region and state well depends on achieving fairness in funding from Montgomery.

In closing, please remember that homecoming this year is on Saturday, September 28, with related events planned for earlier that week. Dena and I look forward to seeing you there.

Ken Kitts

In early 2016, I had the opportunity to meet UNA's president, Ken Kitts, at which time he had been in the position just more than a year. I had been retired a year from Auburn University where I had served for 34 years, the last 15 in the alumni and fundraising world. This chance meeting led to an offer to spend two years at UNA as the Vice President of Advancement, during an interim period of one VP retiring and a job search put on hold. I never planned to leave the city of Auburn, but the possibility of returning to my undergraduate alma mater was something that not only intrigued me, but I could not pass up. Those two years turned into three, as we were wrapping up a successful comprehensive campaign. I never lost sight that my time at UNA was temporary, and my objective was to build a quality team of professionals well-trained to take our University

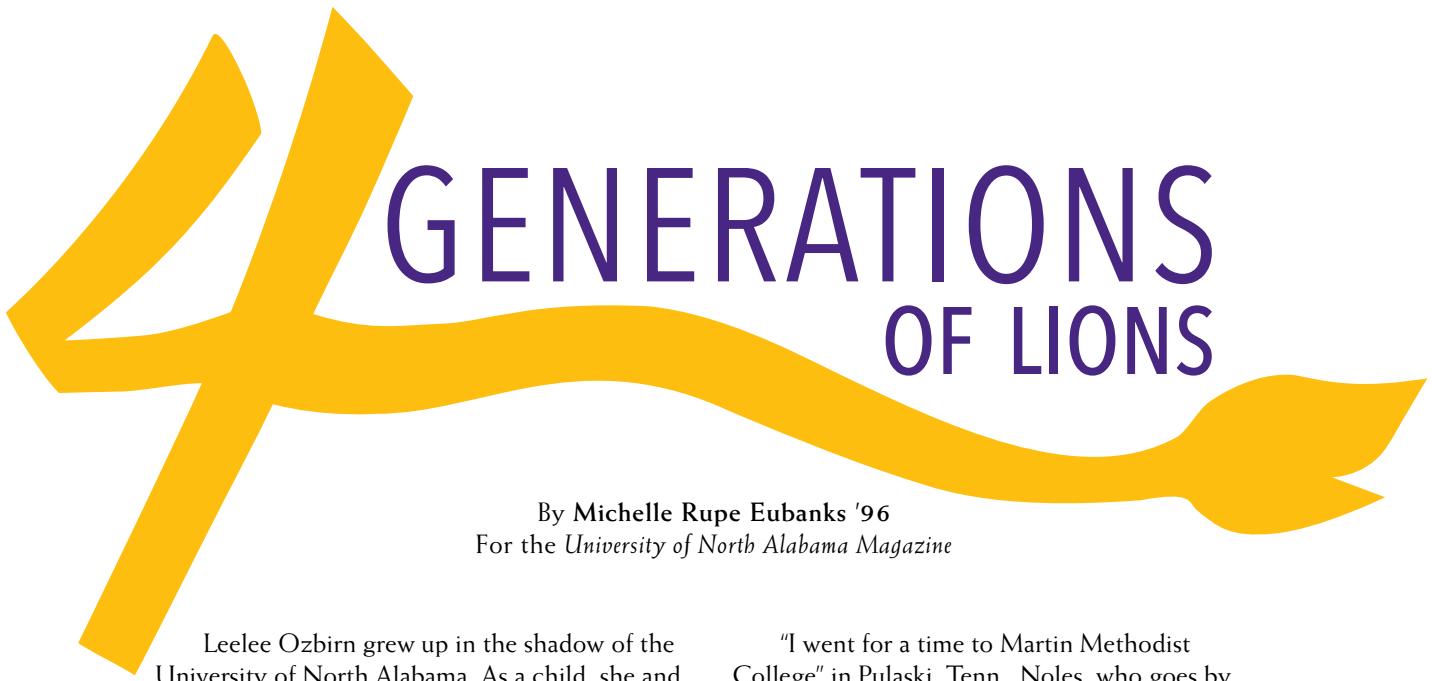


to higher levels of excellence. My time is now complete, and I am pleased to introduce to you Kevin Haslam, who is the new vice president and will be a great addition to the UNA family. He brings with him much experience in development. Be sure to read his feature in this issue.

Coming home has been a real privilege. I can relay with confidence that President Kitts is providing strong leadership and building a great team of people who work hard and strive for improvement in their respective areas. I'll continue supporting our great university but will enjoy doing it from the sidelines as I enter my second retirement. My thanks to Dr. Kitts and the UNA family for allowing me such a great experience and for your support to the University in so many ways. Your continued involvement is needed and encouraged.

**Roar Lions!
Debbie Shaw '82, Ed.D.**





GENERATIONS OF LIONS

By Michelle Rupe Eubanks '96
For the *University of North Alabama Magazine*

Leelee Ozbirn grew up in the shadow of the University of North Alabama. As a child, she and her parents, Bob and Jenny Ozbirn, both alums of UNA, would ride their bikes to campus from their home in Florence's historic district.

She and her two younger sisters, Suzy and Gracie, attended Kilby, the laboratory school for UNA's College of Education and Human Sciences. From hearing Leo and Una roar to seeing the lights from the stadium glowing on a Saturday night, Leelee has always been a Lion at heart. She just had to figure it out for herself.

"I think I came to it gradually," she said of her decision to attend UNA as a freshman in the fall of 2019. "As soon as I took the tour of campus and saw it through the eyes of what it would be like to be a student, I knew that how I knew UNA growing up was only part of the story. This is a close-knit community, and there would be people here who could help me succeed."

Leelee is the fourth generation of her family to attend UNA, and the story of how that happened really begins with Leelee's great-grandmother, Grace Davis Noles, who attended the University in the late 1950s and early 1960s when it was known as Florence State College.

"I went for a time to Martin Methodist College" in Pulaski, Tenn., Noles, who goes by Mimi, said. "You know I had my children, two babies, so I had to stay home with them."

When it was time to resume her education, however, Mimi had moved to Florence, and getting the classes she would need to complete her degree would take place at the University that was just a few blocks from her home.

"Once I had my degree, I taught for 32 years, 20 of those years at Harlan Elementary," she said. "It was different then, you know, so the superintendent just asked me to stay, and so I did."

Of her time at Florence State, she recalled professors who were vital to helping her complete her coursework as well as understanding of the family she was raising in between taking classes in the evenings.

"I always did like school, and I enjoyed going to UNA," she said. "I guess I was sort of a pioneer when I went on to get my Masters in Education because I was in the first class of graduates with that degree, and there were only three of us at the time."

Jenny Ozbirn grew up hearing the stories her grandmother would tell, the years she spent in the

classroom. Like Mimi, she had influential professors who helped guide her along her path, among them Dr. Eleanor Gaunder.

"It was her class on adolescent literature that I took at UNA that sparked my interest in going into teaching," Jenny said. Dr. Gaunder was well-known across campus in the English and Education departments; today, the Phi Kappa Phi Teaching Excellence Award has been named in her honor.

Jenny made a career of teaching literature to students. After her graduation from UNA, she went on to her first job at Coffee High School. Jenny has recently retired from the Florence City Schools system.

As Leelee heard the stories of being a UNA from her mom, Jenny had also heard the stories of being on campus from her father, Jim Noles, who graduated in 1967, the year the name of the University changed from Florence State College to Florence State University.

"I went to UNA because I wanted to be a soldier, and I could be in the ROTC," Jim said. "I was working at the A&P

[grocery store] when a buddy of mine asked me if I wanted to get a head start and enroll over the summer. So I did, and that was the summer of 1964."

The professor who had the biggest effect on Jim was Dr. Frank Mallonée, from whom Jim took constitutional law. Dr. Mallonée spent his career at UNA, teaching history and political science; he passed away in 2016, an endowed scholarship was named in his honor.

"My world opened up in that class," Jim said. "He was an incredible professor, and I took any and every class from him that I could."

It was Jim's career in the Army that took him around the world, and, as a result, Jenny lived on bases in other parts of the world and in the United States. Coming to UNA to attend college was her homecoming, and Mimi was there to welcome her home, to help her do laundry on the weekends, and make grilled cheese sandwiches when only a grilled cheese sandwich would do.

"I look back on that decision and think it's why I chose UNA; I was coming home," Jenny said. "Once I got to campus

and got involved, I absolutely loved it. I lived in Rice [Hall], and I was around kids from all over the place, so that, too, felt like the home I had just left."

UNA is at the heart of the story of Leelee's life really. It is the place that brought her parents as well as her grandparents together, and she said she's ready to make the campus her own, to meet the professors who will change her life and take the classes she'll remember for a lifetime.

"I'll be in the Honors College this fall, and I am looking forward to getting involved in my classes for my major," she said, adding that her goal is to go into international business and, potentially, go to law school.

For Leelee, that journey began in the fall, and, like her mother and grandfather before her, she said she expects to be sharing her stories of being on campus with Mimi, who turned 101 in June.

"I'm lucky to have that relationship," Leelee said. "And I know that I'll be able to make UNA my own. I went with an open mind, and I'm looking forward to where that will take me."

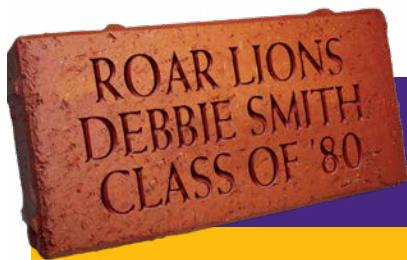


LION TRACKS

LEAVE YOUR TRACKS ON A LIVING TRADITION

The University of North Alabama has made great impressions on the lives of many alumni and friends of the University. Now, you have the opportunity to leave a permanent mark on campus with an engraved brick. Help further the mission of UNA with your contribution.

Bricks are laid in one of two primary locations, the Victory Flame Garden and The Commons walkway. Each marker can feature the graduate's name, year of graduation, specific major, a short message or extracurricular activity



(fraternity or sorority affiliation, football or other sport, band, SGA, etc.). The cost of each 4-by-8-inch brick is \$100, which includes three lines with a maximum of 15 characters each including spaces. Any text exceeding 45 character limit will be truncated. All proceeds from brick orders will benefit the 1830 Fund, which supports immediate campus needs.

Don't miss this exciting opportunity to commemorate and celebrate your personal contribution to the rich tradition of excellence that has flourished and thrived at UNA since 1830. Your gift is 100 percent tax deductible.

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UNA's EMBA Program Named TOP *in the NATION*

The University of North Alabama College of Business' Online Executive Masters of Business Administration (EMBA) program has been named 1st in the nation by College Consensus. The online publication is a unique college ratings website that aggregates publisher rankings and student reviews. They evaluated reputation, convenience, and affordability equally to determine their list of top 25 institutions.

"In 2017 Online Course report named our Executive MBA program as

#1 in the nation," says UNA College of Business Dean Greg Carnes. "We are thrilled that College Consensus has also validated the excellence of our MBA program with a #1 ranking. While other schools in the ranking such as Duke University and Purdue University, may have more name recognition, our students and alumni have known for many years that UNA meets the graduate education needs of business professionals in a unique and affordable manner."

The EMBA program at UNA is one of two options for students to earn an MBA. It is designed to accommodate students who have at least a five-year work history that demonstrates increasing responsibilities in a professional or entrepreneurial position. UNAs Online MBA has been one of the fastest growing programs in the nation during the last five years and is the largest MBA program in the state of Alabama with more than 800 students.



"The students found their day at Windsor to be the best experience of their trip to the United Kingdom."

— Dr. Jeffrey Bibbee

UNA Students Get Behind-the-Scenes Look at BRITISH HISTORY

University of North Alabama students participating in the study abroad program through the Centre for British Studies had a unique experience as part of the research and learning. They went behind the scenes during their private tours of the Royal Archives and the Archives of the Chapel of St. George at the Royal Collection Trust at Windsor Castle just outside London.

"The students found their day at Windsor to be the best experience of their trip to the United Kingdom," said Dr. Jeffrey Bibbee, the director of the UNA Centre for British Studies. "They enjoyed the hands-on nature of the time

in the archives, working with the rare books at St. George's Chapel and the time with the learning team in the state apartments."

As part of their experience, students were able to handle original 12th- to 18th-century documents from their founding charter as a chapel to the first letter in which King George writes of the possible loss of the American colonies. In the Rare Books library, they viewed the original medieval manuscript of the New Testament by John Wycliffe, the very first copy of the Bible in English, and the first book every printed in England using a printing press.

Mitchell-West Center for SOCIAL INCLUSION to Open this Fall

The Mitchell-West Center for Social Inclusion will open on the University of North Alabama campus this fall, and it ushers in the opportunity for all UNA students to feel supported and cared for, according to Dr. Andrea Hunt, the Director of Student Research who has been tapped to serve as the Executive Director of the Center.

"One thing we do really well at UNA is care for our students," she said. "The Center is here to address the critical needs of our students as we move towards a health and well-being model."

In that way, the Center will address a multitude of challenges students may face, Hunt said, from food insecurity to suicide prevention to challenges faced by students in the LGBTQ community.

"The exciting part is that we can bridge the gap between the campus and our community through the services we provide," she said. "We will work with agencies to address the needs of our students on campus as well as get students plugged into service opportunities so that they can make a difference in our community. We want to help instill the idea of social responsibility in our students."



University of NORTH ALABAMA PRESS ROOM

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"One thing we do really well at UNA is care for our students."

— Dr. Andrea Hunt





Dr. Ross Alexander

The University of North Alabama is an innovative, dynamic, and evolving institution with an engaged, committed, and high-performing faculty that is committed to the tripartite missions of

teaching, research, and service. *Profiles in Excellence* showcases and highlights the accomplishments of our faculty members in the areas of research and creative activities in particular, where many have cultivated and earned national and international reputations as scholars, researchers, and artists. The scholarly books, peer-reviewed articles, funded grants, academic presentations, and creative/artistic accomplishments detailed in this publication exemplify the professionalism, creativity, and dedication of our faculty members. As a maturing and growing institution, the University of North Alabama takes great pride in its commitment to discovery, creative inquiry, and research innovation. I offer my gratitude and thanks to all the faculty members featured in *Profiles in Excellence* and hope all the friends and supporters of UNA enjoy reading the accomplishments and activities highlighted here.

Sincerely,

Ross C. Alexander, Ph.D.
Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost
Professor of Political Science

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- 25.... Dr. Jean Ann Helm Allen
Lawrence J. Nelson Award for Outstanding Teaching





Dr. Alejandra Alvarado-Brizuela

Dr. Alejandra Alvarado-Brizuela, an assistant professor of Spanish, is the recipient of the Outstanding Advising Award. She joined the Foreign Language faculty in 2013, and since then she has worked to mentor and engage students both inside and outside of the classroom.

Q: What brought you to UNA?

A: I had just completed my Ph.D., and I had never been to the South before. When I was looking for jobs, my advisor told me to be very intentional about where I applied. I had to read the job postings carefully and ask myself: Can I contribute to this program? Do I bring something to this program to make the students better?

Q: That's good advice!

A: Yes! I had a lot to go through.

Q: So what was it about UNA?

A: The program intrigued me in that foreign language isn't required, so the students in our classes really want to be there. It's a smaller university, and I was a first-generation college student, and there are many of them here, too. I wanted to be able to contribute to that.

Q: Now that you've been here six years, how is that different than your first year?

A: During my first commencement here, I saw the students in the department, but they didn't feel like *my* students. The last commencement in May of 2019 those are the students I met at SOAR and had from the very beginning. I was able to make a difference with them, and we had a different connection. I could look at them and see how far they had come.

Q: You have a term of endearment on campus, Dr. AB.

A: Yes. It actually started when I defended my dissertation, and I was still an adjunct at Indiana State University. A student nominated me for a mentor award, and she called me that in her paper. I just brought it along with me.

Q: Tell me some of the situations that have presented themselves to you regarding students.

A: There seems to be a balancing act between what students need to do and what they want to do. A lot of what I do is ask them what they really want to do. Many of them tell me they love to travel, so they want to be an interpreter. I ask them how that looks in their future. A lot of it is also helping them put their expectations into perspective.

Q: Do you see yourself staying at UNA?

A: Yes. I feel like UNA has a very unique environment and community. It's big enough so that really big things can happen and do, like the new programs that put us at the same level as other bigger universities. It's also small enough that we're not losing the human element or contact with the students. I never need to ask what their student number is. I'm getting to know them and their families, so we're building a network.

Q: What does it mean to you that students took the time to write letters as part of your nomination?

A: It took me by surprise at first. When [Dr.] Claudia [Vance] asked me to get students to write letters, I thought about those I had taught since they were freshmen. To read the things they wrote – it made me feel warm and fuzzy. They remembered things I didn't remember, and I was humbled by it. I like to think I was doing a decent job of advising, helping students, and working with them to balance their work and school schedules. I didn't realize how much it meant to them.

Q: For those learning a language, what's the best way to maintain the skill level?

A: You have to make opportunities to use the language; you have to take it out and use it every day, which is no different than playing an instrument or a sport. I always encourage students to read the news or listen to podcasts in the language they're learning. You might not know all of the words, but you can get an idea of it.

Q: Do you still feel as though you're learning English?

A: Always. It's an ever-evolving, always-changing language. I feel like I am never going to think I am a native speaker, but I believe I am near-ish native. I don't think I'll ever get rid of the accent.



Brad Carter, Barbara "Jimmie" Waites, Walker Mattox, and Peyton Byrd are UNA's

FULBRIGHT SCHOLARS

By Kali Daniel '16
For the *University of North Alabama Magazine*

Before 2017, Fulbright grants were virtually unknown at the University of North Alabama. Mollie Schaefer became the first University recipient in 2017, and, in 2019, four more recent graduates will join the ranks of student Fulbright scholars.

While traveling to different parts of the globe – the Czech Republic, Malaysia, and Taiwan – they'll be gaining similar experiences. For each, Fulbright offers an opportunity to share the knowledge they've gained at UNA while also allowing them the opportunity to acquire an understanding of diverse global cultures.



Peyton Byrd, Class of 2018

A photography major from Spring Hill, Tenn., Byrd received her English Teaching Assistantship to Hronov, Czech Republic. When she's not teaching English to high school students, she'll be teaching photography, something she said is her passion.

"I hope to grow my teaching knowledge and strategies," Byrd said, "not only to better myself in a leadership role but also my abilities as a communicator."

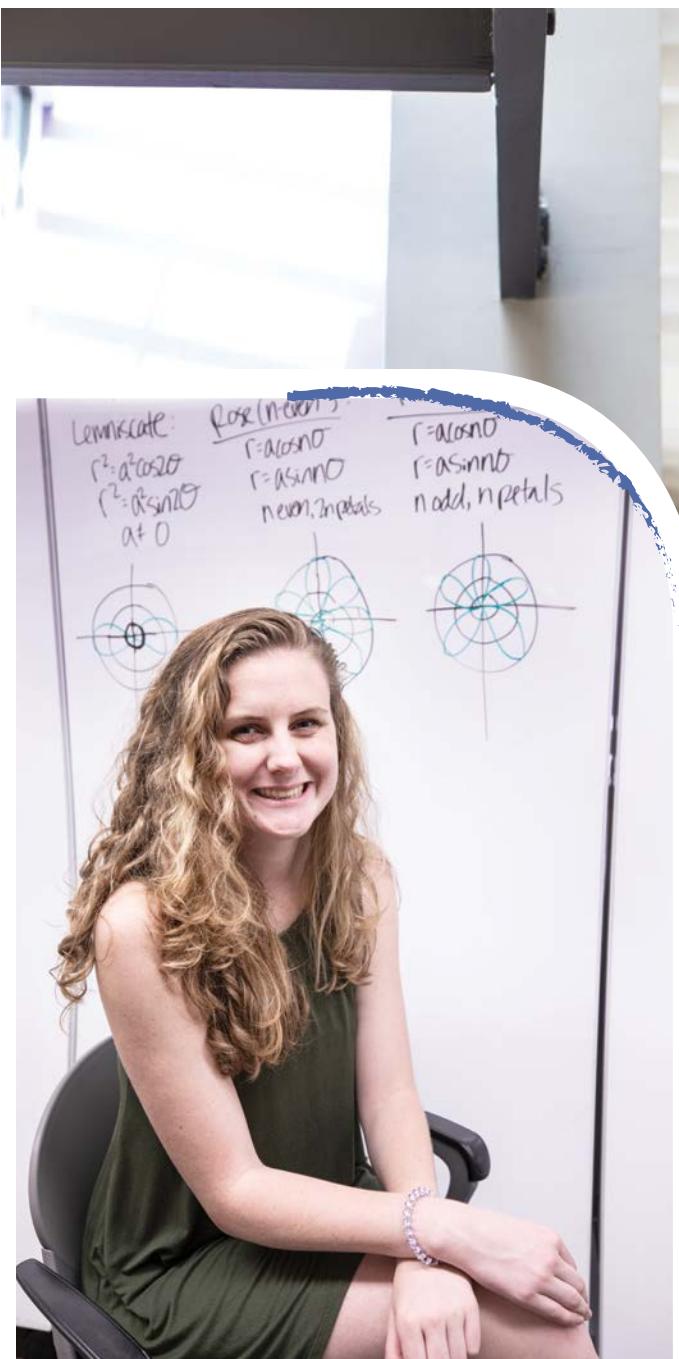
Byrd plans to end her Fulbright program with a compilation of her photography as well as that of her students.

"I plan on putting together a show as a way to display the contrast of the viewpoints of a native and non-native within the

same space, and how that affects a person's visual perception," she said. "This is a concept that I hope to continue to build on in my work. My goal is to learn as much through my students as they can learn from me."

Byrd fell in love with the idea of travel and new cultural experiences when she went to Europe in 2017 to study abroad. She said being a creative thinker offered her the opportunity to capture cultural diversity and share it with others, something she could both do and teach with the Fulbright program.

"This was ultimately my 'light bulb moment' that made me decide to take the plunge and apply for the program," she said. "The greatest aspects of this program lie within the opportunities it creates for each individual, regardless of major or experience."



Walker Mattox

Byrd said Fulbright recipients may come from different backgrounds, but they're all united in their passions, desires, and dedication to explore and share knowledge internationally.

"There are opportunities for every person, regardless of age, academic level, or field of study, and it's a great way for us to meet new people and experience life," she said. "Our desire to experience the world beyond our own is what unites us."

Brad Carter, Class of 2019

For Carter, the Fulbright experience could not have come at a better time.

"The most alluring components of the award were the potential for personal and career growth and the chance for



Peyton Byrd

unprecedented cultural immersion," Carter said. "My previous experience with tutoring international students in probability theory and quantitative statistical analysis, as well as my post-graduation trip to Japan, left me with a deep longing for more engagement at an international level."

The Meridianville, Ala., native, who majored in computer information systems, will be teaching English in Yilan County, Taiwan, as well as organizing a science, technology, engineering, and mathematics camp. While teaching is admittedly not his forte, Carter said he hopes to use the experience as a foundation for a master's degree he will pursue when he returns in 2020.

"The world is a big place, and it's easy to stay comfortable," Carter said. "Fulbright serves as a demonstration of character through initiative to problem-solving, acceptance of diversity, and passion for discovery. Employers will value someone with these traits in the contemporary workplace. International work experience broadens your overall perspective."

Carter's determination to better others and himself through education and career development is a notable common ground for all Fulbright students.

"We all find passion in what we do," he said. "Passion is crucial to producing something exceptional."

Carter said Fulbright recipients also appreciate cultural diversity and the dilemmas that present themselves. What sets them apart is their willingness – eagerness, even – to learn from the differences.



Brad Carter

"We all seek challenge in our work," he said. "Difficulty brings pressure to the forefront, and this combination often yields the best results."

Walker Mattox, Class of 2019

Although Walker Mattox graduated with a degree in mathematics, her minor in health will be at the forefront of her efforts while she fulfills her English Teaching Assistantship in Malaysia.

"I'll be doing an after-school running program where I encourage my students to exercise for their physical health while teaching the importance of overall health," she said. Mattox was a student athlete on the North Alabama cross-country and track teams.

A native of Starkville, Miss., she faces a unique challenge in pursuing her Fulbright experience: She's never been out of the country.

"It will all be a big culture shock," she said. "But this will contribute to my future by helping me understand how to work with people who came up in a very different background than myself. I hope to teach college one day, so I think getting to teach across the world for a year will help me know how to make my classroom a very informative, but also fun, place to learn."

Mattox hadn't considered Fulbright until she received a list of qualifications via email and thought: Why not?

"Little did I know it would lead me

to this wonderful opportunity," she said. "There is a lot of value in understanding the world around us and knowing it is so much bigger than what we imagine."

When she returns to the U.S., Mattox has a few graduate assistantship options. She said her increased communication skills will make her even more marketable as she continues to apply to graduate schools while in Malaysia. But she's not letting her current plans dictate her future.

"I am open to doing so many things and not fixed on anything specific," she said. "I'm just going to keep working hard every day and see where this beautiful life takes me."

"The world is a big place, and it's easy to stay comfortable. Fulbright serves as a demonstration of character through initiative to problem-solving, acceptance of diversity, and passion for discovery."

— Brad Carter

Barbara "Jimmie" Waites, Class of 2018

The Youth Career Incubator is Waites' brainchild, and now she hopes to grow it while fulfilling her English Teaching Assistantship in Taiwan. The goal of the incubator is to offer students a location to support, explore, and develop their career ambitions as well as provide opportunities to improve their English.

"Fulbright will allow me to fully immerse myself in Taiwanese culture, learn colloquial Mandarin through the dialog that I will have with my students



Barbara "Jimmie" Waites

and colleagues, and learn the day-to-day life of Taiwanese people," said the Madison, Ala., native.

By documenting on film her life in America, Waites wants to take her students on a visual journey to the place she calls home.

"I am moving to a small city in Taiwan, comparable to Florence; therefore, sharing my small-town experience may help my students grasp that our communities may not be so different even though they are on opposite sides of the world," she said.

In addition to the Fulbright, Waites is also UNA's first recipient of the David L. Boren Scholarship funded by the National Security Education Program. The Boren Scholarship funds a post-graduate's travel to another country to further

cultural awareness and diplomatic relations.

Waites worked with Dr. Matthew Price, the Director of Premier National and International Awards, through the application process and to determine which would be a better fit for her career goals. In the end, she chose Fulbright as it afforded her the immersion experience in Taiwan.

"I had the opportunity to augment my cultural literacy of China through a study abroad my junior year of college, an opportunity to co-teach marketing in China my senior year, and I visited China this past winter break to tour graduate schools," she said. "To say the least, I've had my fair share of time in China. However, I have not had the opportunity to immerse myself in Taiwanese culture."

Borah is UNA's Faculty Fulbright

Dr. Joy Borah has spent her career making a difference.

She started teaching in the Department of Social Work at UNA in 1997 and served as Chair of the Department for eight years, receiving the Outstanding Department Chair Award in May 2015. As chair, she expanded enrollment in the program, oversaw the department's national reaffirmation of accreditation with 100 percent compliance, and launched the Certificate for Child Welfare Practice. It was the first certificate program in the State of Alabama to train child welfare workers and meet workforce training needs.

She also served on the Commission on Global Education and today serves on the Commission on Leadership and Professional Development of the Council of Social Work Education, the national social work education accrediting body.

Her background in social work as well as her leadership of the department allowed her to take on the position of Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs in 2015 and her most recent role as the Senior Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs in 2017. In 2015, she was appointed by the Provost as UNA's campus Fulbright representative for both the Fulbright Program Advisor (FPA) as well as Fulbright Scholar Liaison programs.

In this role, Dr. Borah has the responsibility to promote Fulbright programs on campus and work with Dr. Matt Price and the FPA team to mentor and



guide faculty and students. The campus-wide Fulbright workshop, initiated by the Office of Academic Affairs in 2016, is an annual spring event. In 2017, the first Fulbright winner in UNA's history was announced. Today, that number has grown exponentially, and four student winners hail from UNA.

Further, UNA's faculty have been recipients of Fulbright scholar grants. In 2016, Dr. Lisa Kirch received a Fulbright grant to Germany, and, in 2019, Dr. Borah will go to France as the most recent recipient. It's an honor she says is valuable in her research, teaching, and administrative roles.

"The opportunity to participate in the 2019 Fulbright award to France will allow me to learn and adopt best practices for my institution, and thereby expand and promote the many Fulbright opportunities

for our faculty and students," she said. "At the institutional level, the opportunity will allow me to enhance UNA's global engagement initiatives with France, learn about France's educational initiatives, support enrollment of French students on campus, and strengthen our French Studies program."

France's history and rich traditions, along with its influence over the spectrum of arts and literature, have long-fascinated Dr. Borah.

The country's "central role in the world economy as a leading member of the European Union, one of the five permanent members of the [United Nations] Security Council, and its policies on education, healthcare, and social security in the creation of a civil society, are very interesting to me," she said.

While in France, Dr. Borah will spend time in Bordeaux, Nice, and Paris, engaging in research, and establishing professional networks with faculty in higher education institutions in France.

"As a faculty member, the experience will allow me to integrate French concepts of knowledge and philosophy into my teaching and expand my research agenda to the study of France," she said. "As globalization has led to more internationalization of universities, I believe better communication, exchange, and cooperation are imperative in today's rapidly changing higher education landscape. I am increasingly convinced in my job that promoting global awareness is not a luxury; it is a strategic necessity."

— Michelle Eubanks '96





CAROL BEHEL '90

Alabama's Teacher of the Year for 2019

By Michelle Rupe Eubanks '96
For the *University of North Alabama Magazine*

There's something very dear, very natural and easy-going, about Carol Behel's interactions with her students.

Her tone of voice is warm; her gestures invite participation, and small hands shoot up to answer any question Mrs. Behel might ask, each child seeking to be the one with whom she interacts next.

It's clear that the students are learning – today that lesson is English-language idioms – but they're also having fun.

"I want them to see how there are Spanish equivalents to these phrases we use all the time in English," Behel said. "In English, we say that it's raining cats and dogs; in Spanish, it's something else. But these small things, these simple gestures and phrases, set native and non-native speakers of English apart. I

want to help them understand the language and bring it to life."

These seemingly simple yet effective teaching methods are what has set Behel apart from her peers, and they are among the reasons that she has been selected as Alabama's Teacher of the Year for 2019.

Behel is a 1990 graduate of the University of North Alabama, with a double major in Spanish and German. She received a second degree in education in 1993. Her story of growing up in a foreign country and coming to the United States mirrors that of many of her students, and it provides context and meaning to her role in the classroom.

"I guess I am connected to my students in that way," she said from her classroom at Weeden Elementary, a grade school in the



Behel interacts with a group of her ESL students in the Weeden Elementary library.

Florence City School system. "It helps them build a bridge to language and this culture."

Behel has been an English as a Second Language, or ESL, teacher for almost 20 years. A portion of her time was spent as an itinerant teacher, going to students' homes and providing instruction outside of the traditional classroom setting. She has been at Weeden for seven years now, and she'll often instruct as many as 100 ESL students per semester.

"There are two of us, two ESL teachers, and it's more manageable," Behel said. "The program just keeps growing."

The vast majority of non-native speakers speak Spanish. There are also students in the system who speak Dutch, and others who speak

Cebuano, a language spoken by students from the Philippines.

"The smaller children don't struggle quite as much," Behel said. "But the first barrier for them is the name of things. What is this? Or what is that? The second barrier is that the culture just isn't the same. So we have to talk, and I have to make them feel safe. They're afraid to make mistakes."

As their teacher, she's with her students – and often the parents – throughout their time at Weeden. She hears the challenges they face and provides instruction and encouragement along the way.

Behel said it reminds her of being a student in the United States for the first time.

"You know, I came for a six-week program with Partners of the

Americas," she said. "I stayed with a family and attended Colbert Heights High School; it was so much fun. I got to be part of this American family. I know what it feels like to be unsure of yourself in this kind of a setting."

It was during this exchange program that Behel said she met her future husband, Eric. After graduating from high school and attending a year of university in Vienna, Austria, the couple married, and Carol joined her new husband as a student at UNA.

"I love languages and the study of language, so it was a natural choice for me," she said. "I thought I might be an interpreter or a translator, but I specialized in education."

In her role as the ESL teacher, she might use any one of the languages she speaks throughout the course of

a regular school day. There are lesson plans in sentences geared toward helping her students understand and use survival English – things like how to make a phone call or locate a restroom. Other, more advanced, students work collaboratively, using cause-and-effect exercises as part of the learning process.

Behel has also initiated a reading club for parents with the help of her UNA intern so that parents can learn some of the best practices to help their children be better readers at home.

"So we don't have a rule about mistakes," she said. "They're going to happen, so if a child feels more comfortable explaining something to me in her native Spanish, that's okay. The goal is to help her get better."

Each of these details – the small tasks that, cumulatively, have created this very broad method of teaching non-native English speakers – sparked, in her colleagues, the idea of nominating Behel for Teacher of the Year.

Daphnae Hogan '08, the principal at Weeden, was a part of the nomination process.

"As our ESL teacher, Mrs. Behel is often called upon to help us with communication issues we might be having," Hogan said of Behel's role with the English as a Second Language program. "But it's so much more than that. She also has an adult class for parents to help them learn English so that they can be more engaged as parents as their children learn the language."

In that way, it's not just a class or a school Mrs. Behel is helping to cultivate; she's also helping create a nurturing and vibrant community of English-language learners of all ages, Hogan said.



Carol Behel, left, and her colleagues Corey Behel and Daphnae Hogan are all graduates of UNA.

"You know, the kids just love her; we all do," she said. "You can't help but love her."

The application process was extensive. Behel submitted five essays and her resume. Once she made it through the process in the 7th Congressional District, she was part of the next round of 16 nominations. The process narrowed again to eight other nominations until, in May of 2019, she was asked to attend a ceremony in Montgomery for the Final Four Teacher of the Year nominees.

"I had to do an interview, and I had to go to this event, and I had no idea, none," Behel said. "So that when they called my name, I couldn't believe it. I just stopped and thought they'd made a mistake."

Since then, Behel said she's enjoyed a few speaking engagements in her new role, which will take her away from the classroom and her students at Weeden for much of the 2019-2020 school year.

Behel isn't quite finished competing for titles, however. As Alabama's Teacher of the Year, she will learn in January if she has been selected as the National Teacher of the Year. This event takes place in Washington, D.C., and is organized by the Council of Chief State School Officers.

Behel said she's not too concerned with that next step, instead, she's focused on her role in Alabama and helping other ESL teachers incorporate best practices into their lesson plans, walking them through some of the challenges she's faced, and encouraging them when the tasks seem insurmountable.

Because, for her, it's the students that make returning to the classroom so special, those raised hands and inquisitive faces.

"I will miss them," she said. "I love my students, you know? They're so precious, and they work so hard. They're the ones who keep me coming back."





Dr. Peggy Bergeron

Dr. Peggy Bergeron, an assistant professor of nursing in the Anderson College of Nursing and Health Professions, was named the Eleanor Gaunder Phi Kappa Phi Excellence in Teaching Award winner.

Q: Why did you want to become a nurse, and then why a nurse educator?

A: I have always had a calling to serve people. As a freshman in college, I decided that nursing would be a good fit for me. I knew I wanted to give back, and this would be a good way to do that. There is also a lot of teaching in nursing. Nurses educate all the time. As a nurse educator, I am teaching and showing the students how to be exceptional nurses.

Q: What makes an exceptional nurse?

A: You have to be strong clinically and morally, family-focused, and smart. It's a person who is willing to go above and beyond for a patient. These are also often the people who stay beyond their shift to make sure a patient's family member arrived, who stay to hold a patient's hand or sit with him or her. It's so much more than healthcare.

Q: How are you seeing the profession evolve?

A: Technology is a privilege and a burden. It's moving to faster and better technology, but if we rely on it too much, we lose the human touch. A nurse can learn so much from a patient just by touching her. Technology can certainly make the workload easier, but it can't be equated to what we can learn through touch and having that basic human eye contact. You have to still take the time to have that interaction.

Q: How do you impart that to your students?

A: I talk a lot about the little things and about family-centered care. The little things can mean a lot, like listening to the patient and what he's telling you. If it's different than what a machine or a screen is saying, listen to the patient. Nurses today have to be comfortable in these situations because there will be lots of interaction with co-workers and families, as well as with patients. Nurses are going to come into contact with so many people in the healthcare setting, and it's important to have a level of comfort.

Q: What is it that makes you get up each day and be excited about doing this job?

A: It's the students; it's getting to see them and talk to them. It's that basic interaction. To be able to go into the classroom and teach and to be able to have that engagement and opportunity to connect in a way they can grasp and retain – seeing that, for me, is the best. I teach maternity nursing primarily, so I love the clinical aspect of the course. When they come into class and tell me what they've seen and to be able to share in that with them is huge for me. It's those moments when they realize that this is exactly what they want to be doing with their lives – that "yes!". We affect people and their lives, and knowing that and being able to do it every day is a very powerful thing for me and them.

Q: What does it mean to you, then, to hear from your students – in their words – about how you have affected them?

A: I'm grateful. I'm honored. I'm humbled to hear the positive words. In teaching, you hope to make an impact. When you find out that you have, it's very moving, and I do get very emotional. I get close to a lot of my students, and I am honored when they come to me and share some of their challenges, like a bad relationship or a difficult time in their lives. Every class and every student is different, so it means a great deal.

Q: You get a bit emotional about it?

A: I'm an emotional person, but, in our college, we get a lot closer to our students through the clinics and the courses. Through advising, we might have been with these students for four or five years. Connections form through that process, and I am so proud and excited to be part of that process and their success. I get to empower future nurses, and they have just as much of an impact on me as I might have on them. They have more strength than they will ever know.



Dr. Corey Cagle

Dr. Corey Cagle, chair of the Department of Accounting and Business Law, is the winner of the Jim Couch Award for Outstanding Scholarship/Research.

Q: What does it mean to you to receive this award?

A: When I began the Ph.D. program, research was the thing I was nervous about. I loved the teaching part because it's what I had been doing; research was just so foreign to me. My most recent paper won an award from an accounting organization, and that means so much because the co-authors on that paper were both classmates in my Ph.D. program, and I think we were all equally hesitant about research back then. That was eight or nine years ago, and I am still working with them on publishing papers.

Q: How do you blend the roles of teaching and research?

A: Teaching is what gave me the idea for the paper. I started the research, I learned a lot about the topic, and I am using it every semester, so the teaching has informed my research, and my research has informed my teaching. I also have a good background in researching accounting history, and I try to pull as much as I can into every class, especially the grad classes.

Q: How are you engaging students in this historic aspect of accounting?

A: I do try to pull this information in where it fits. For instance, we might find that there were accounting theories out there, but they couldn't be put into practice because the technology just wasn't there yet. Sometimes, the discussion goes deeper, and I might teach about an accounting fraud that took place in the 1930s that dictates why we do what we do today. Another example: The way we account for stock dividends makes no sense,

but there is some interesting history behind why we do what we do.

Q: Tell us about the classes you're teaching.

A: For the first time in my career, I will be teaching nothing but graduate classes this fall, including accounting research, which will cover researching the standards and theoretical research. When I was in school, no one told me research would be my life. We'll spend almost half of the course talking about the different kinds of research. We'll also do some research into accounting history. For the first time at UNA, we've put together a class that will help students take the CPA exam. We'll give them some tips, and we'll have some CPA medalists in who can provide them with some strategies. We also have a course in fraud, and it's a fun one, too.

Q: You raise a good point there. Accounting doesn't have a strong reputation as being fun.

A: I think we're changing that. We took a group of students to New York City and Connecticut in January to visit the accounting standards setters' offices. It was perfect. We had a group of 16 students, and they were awesome. We went to the financial accounting standard board and the governmental accounting standards board there, and we had a chance to meet board members. We got to hear from the people who are doing the things that we are learning about and hear from those who encounter the problems and how they are dealing with them. It gives students perspectives to the things they're doing and why.

Q: What were the students' take-aways?

A: It was an opportunity to allow them to put faces with the names of those they only read about and what goes into the processes. These are people who have done great things, and this gives the students a chance to see this taking place outside of Florence; they can see the big conference rooms and large offices.

Q: How do you see the field of accounting changing?

A: It's getting to the point where a lot of the routine things an accountant does are now becoming automated. There will be fewer mundane tasks to do and more of an opportunity to put one's mind to work in order to analyze things.

Q: Where do you see your career taking you from here?

A: I've been the chair of the department for two years now, and I absolutely love it. It's been so much fun figuring out ways to build the program and coming up with new things to try. I don't see myself going anywhere. I am really having a blast.



Kevin R. Haslam

VP for Advancement; Executive Director for UNA Foundation

Kevin R. Haslam, B.A., M.S., joined the University administration in June 2019. Before joining UNA, Mr. Haslam served as the Assistant Vice President, Alumni Relations and Annual Giving/ Major Gifts Development Officer at the University of Texas Medical Branch - Galveston. Mr. Haslam has served others as a development professional at the local, regional, and national levels, in centralized and decentralized development models, in the areas of academia, athletics, and medicine. Mr. Haslam possesses vast comprehensive campaign experience at higher education institutions as well as working collaboratively with Boards of Trustees, Foundation Boards, Senior University Leadership, Alumni Association Boards, various academic departments and local community and business partners. Mr. Haslam has a Bachelor of Arts from New Mexico Highlands University and a Master of Science from Wayne State College (NE).

Kevin's family from left: Gehrig, Kathy, Kevin, Payton, and Landry.

NEW VICE PRESIDENT FOR ADVANCEMENT KEVIN HASLAM

Even before officially beginning his tenure at the University of North Alabama this summer, Kevin Haslam, his wife, Kathy, and his three sons, Payton, Gehrig, and Landry made some distinctly local memories.

They'd become almost regulars at the Trowbridge's Ice Cream and Sandwich Shoppe in downtown Florence, and they'd spent several Saturday mornings on the banks of the Tennessee River, fishing poles in hand, enjoying the beauty of the landscape around them and making new friends along the way. It's not uncommon to see the family on their front porch, visiting with neighbors or tossing the ball around the front yard.

To know Kevin is to know that this is how he operates – family comes first, and the rest will follow.

As the new Vice President for Advancement and the Executive Director of the University of North Alabama Foundation, this philosophy is what guides him in his day-to-day role as well

as in his interactions with alumni and friends of UNA.

"It's really a three-step process," Kevin said. "First, I genuinely appreciate and value everyone, both internally and externally. We get to do life together. It's important to really get to know people – their hopes, goals, dreams, and passions. Something that was very appealing to me about this position is that I would get to do that in an environment where family is clearly so important on campus and in this community."

Secondly, he said, it's to educate others about philanthropy.

"When we're talking about 'philanthropy,' its' root means a genuine love for people," Haslam said. "It's an honor to work in development and to find out what their philanthropic priorities are. Philanthropy is about the giver, about honoring every gift and helping donors understand how easy it is to make a significant difference in the lives of others through their gifts."

The final step is to allow everyone the opportunity to give, according to Haslam.

"Most people think it's just about money, and that is our big charge, but it's also about time and talent," he said. "It's very important to value and appreciate people for who they are, where they are, and to connect with them at whatever level they feel comfortable."

It's that last bit – the giving at whatever level they feel comfortable – that's Kevin's sweet spot as he understands that giving is deeply personal, and he's seen how this can work to affect and empower donors at all levels.

"I've worked with a gentleman who, to you and me, would have looked penniless, but he had all of this money that his parents left him, and he wanted to honor them with his gift," Kevin said. "I've worked with an older couple who had no children, and they viewed their endowed scholarship as their legacy. It's an honor and a privilege to me to be able to do this. We help people fulfill their deepest philanthropic passions while empowering the students, faculty, and staff of UNA to pursue their goals and dreams."

Kevin's passion for his work is infectious. He joined a team of gift officers who helped bring the most recent capital campaign to fruition, beating the projected \$35 million goal and finishing at just more than \$36 million. In addition to the Office of Advancement, Rogers Hall is also home to Alumni Relations as well as the University Communications and Marketing staff.

"I feel so blessed because Dr. (Debbie) Shaw did a remarkable job building this team," he said. "I wasn't in a position to hire the people I am working with, but, had I been given the opportunity to do so, I would have hired everyone in advancement."

Dr. Debbie Shaw '82 retired from her three-year tenure in the interim Vice President for Advancement role at the end of July.

When he's not in the office, Kevin's passions lie in building connections to the community through service. He might also be just as likely to take up his more introspective hobby of wood carving.

"You know, that's totally selfish, but it's something I really love and would

enjoy doing more of," Kevin said, his characteristic grin spreading across his face. "It's possible you will find me at First Fridays, manning a booth on Court Street in downtown and selling some of my work."

It's through these vocations that he said our passions as individuals grow and take root, influencing what we become.

"I believe to the depths of my soul that I was placed on this earth to encourage, empower, and equip others to become the best they are capable of

becoming," he said. "It's why I take my role in development so personally. Our charge, at the oldest four-year institution in the state of Alabama, is to engage others, both internally and externally, develop a relationship with them, and connect them to UNA however they prefer, be it through their time, talent, or treasure. If we don't do this, who does? So, yes. I am very passionate about it. I feel the breadth and weight of this responsibility. It resonates in me and inspires me every day."



PRESIDENT'S CABINET

The President's Cabinet at the University of North Alabama represents a group of committed donors who give \$1000 or more annually to our 1830 Fund, which provides the University the financial flexibility to pursue UNA's mission. These gifts are used to address immediate university needs, support scholarships, vital university programs, study-abroad opportunities, faculty research, new facilities, classroom upgrades, research technology, and so much more! Anyone who joins the President's Cabinet will be invited to an annual meeting and dinner. Joining at the Gold level (\$2,500+) includes additional invitations such as the Donors of Distinction Dinner.

We hope you will join us in supporting our University.

To join, or for more information about the President's Cabinet, please contact Laura Hamner at lhamner1@una.edu or visit una.edu/annual-giving and click on the President's Cabinet tab.



Dr. Lee Renfroe

Dr. Lee Renfroe is a professor in the Department of Kinesiology. She has earned the Outstanding Service Award for a number of reasons, not the least of which is her ongoing service to students, the department, and the University. In her nomination of Dr. Renfroe, Jacquelyn Allen, a visiting instructor in the kinesiology department wrote: "[Dr. Renfroe] genuinely wants everyone to excel and gives freely of information for the betterment of others, the department, and UNA."

Q: You have a passion for service. What do you believe drives this?

A: I never want anyone to struggle if I think I can help; I just don't want that for them. I have always wanted to help people and make things better, and I think it comes from the fact that I have had a great life. Since I have had that, I want to help others have a great life, too.

Q: What prompted you to get into your field?

A: I was going to be a veterinarian. I went to Auburn, because that's where you go in Alabama if you're going to be a vet. And, come to think of it, this might be why I mentor students so heavily who are struggling to find their way. Anyway, I went to Auburn, and I made a C in a chemistry class of 250 students. When that

happened, I thought my dream was over. I had no one telling me otherwise. So, after two quarters (Auburn was on the quarter system at the time), I called my parents and told them how lost I was. I had no other plan. I was sure my dream was shot, so I asked if I could come home. My parents had graduated from UNA, and I had a brother who was a senior at UNA at the time, so my dad suggested I go to UNA and just try to figure things out. I came the next summer, and I didn't know anyone here other than my brother. But I got in Rice [Hall], and I met one of my best friends, who is still one of my best friends, when we were in line to pay, which is how you did things then. I spent the summer taking general studies and electives, but I had always been athletic and health-minded. I ended up taking HPE213, which is Foundations of Health, in Room 307 in Flowers, which is the exact classroom I teach in today. Two weeks into that class, I asked the professor, Dr. [William] Glidewell, if I could get a job in this, and it was done. My major was chosen. I already had a doctorate in mind.

Q: When did UNA and using that doctorate come into the picture?

A: I got married when I was working on my graduate degree, and I went on to finish my doctorate, both of which came from [the University of] Alabama. I applied for a job with the state health department as a public health educator in Madison County, and I never thought I had a chance. But I ended up getting the job. At the same time, my husband got a job with TVA in Huntsville. There I stayed for five years. I loved that job; it was so interesting. My dad was with State Farm for 30 years, so all of my life I had worked for him in his office. When I left the health department, I did it to work as a State Farm agent in Huntsville. I did that for one-and-a-half years, and I had reached my limit. I was growing my family, and I didn't know what I would do next, but it's one of the things I tell my students: The hardest times in life will teach you the most. It was certainly the case for me as it allowed me to get into one of my largest service works, which was the children's ministry at my church.

Q: So it's not been a straight path?

A: Not at all, but I am so thankful for it because I have learned so much. My lowest point was when I left Auburn. I always had a career plan, and I stuck to it. I was good at science, and it would be my thing. When my balloon burst, it was so difficult for me, which is why UNA has been so important to me. I never dreamed that I would be teaching at UNA, but what an ideal fit it's been. I think it's why what I do with the students is so important to me: because of where I was in my life and what UNA did for me. It has changed my life.



Dr. Jean Ann Helm Allen

Dr. Jean Ann Helm Allen, an associate professor in the Department of Kinesiology, is this year's recipient of the Lawrence J. Nelson Award for Outstanding Teaching.

Q: Tell me what brought you to UNA.

A: I'm originally from Houston, Texas, but my family is from Alabama. My mom went to the University of Alabama, as did I. When I finished my Ph.D., I decided I would go anywhere that would pay me. So my first job was in Texas, but a couple of things happened there that put teaching on the back burner. A colleague messaged me about this job back in Alabama, so I applied. I immediately felt like this was where I needed to be. During the interview, I got to teach a class, and, from that moment, I knew that teaching was very important here, too, so it felt like a good fit. I felt that from the moment I interviewed, and, of course, when I got to see the lions on that initial visit, I knew.

Q: How special is it, then, that you've received this award for teaching?

A: It's a wonderful experience. I feel like our department is one of the closest on campus. We do things together outside of work, and we refer to each other as family. And this work family of mine happens to be packed with phenomenal teachers. For them to feel like I deserve this award means the world to me.

Q: Has it been what you thought it would be?

A: Yes. I love that we have a laboratory school [Kilby]. I wasn't aware that UNA had that program, so, as I was researching before my interview and discovered it, I was so excited about the opportunity. It's very cool that we have the opportunity for our students to be able to teach the Kilby students. It's nice to be able to have a strong

working relationship with the Kilby faculty who feel the same about teaching as I do.

Q: It sounds like you were craving that experience before you even knew it was an option?

A: Having a school, the nature of which is to work with the university, means an open line of communication on what teaching looks like. We want these future teachers to be top-notch and to see examples of what they need to be when they graduate. With the lab school, I can participate with them in what they need to learn while hearing feedback from the students. The biggest thing about it is that it's designed to work well with higher education.

Q: Has teaching – and the desire to teach – been something you've sought to attain?

A: Oh, my gosh, yes. From the time I was a small child, I asked my parents for an overhead projector for Christmas. Finally, when I was eight, and after begging for one for three years, I got one. I burned out I don't know how many bulbs on it, and I was "teaching" the neighborhood kids. They'd come over, and I would have a classroom set up in my house. My teachers would give me their old overhead sheets, and I would just start teaching. I knew that teaching was something I had to do, but I also loved being outdoors and being physically active. Being able to teach future PE teachers – and being able to do that here, in this environment and with these resources – is very meaningful to me.



Dr. Helm Allen got her first overhead projector when she was eight.

Q: There seems to be more and more emphasis placed on PE teachers because of their ability to help combat childhood obesity.

A: For years, there was a lot of pressure to get rid of health, PE, and adaptive PE. Still is, really. But, what research is telling us today is that good health and physical activity are a link to better academic performance. PE teachers, however, are often not taken seriously, and are referred to as ball rollers because that's what many of them do. My goal for PE in general is for students to be active for a lifetime. I want to teach things that will resonate with the kids and stay with them throughout their lives. There's no point in playing dodgeball, or other games like it, if you get out early on in the game and have to sit on the sidelines.



"Well, it all started because I was wanting to be more intentional about how we reach our players, about developing them beyond football."

— Cody Gross '96



The MEN of MANLY MONDAY

PROGRAM AIMS TO PREPARE ATHLETES FOR MORE
THAN JUST THE PLAYING FIELD

By Jeremy Henderson
For the *University of North Alabama Magazine*

Coach Steve Carter was pretty sure he was up on his vaccines. So what in the world was everyone talking about? He felt fine, healthy. Sometimes, if Monday's lesson had gone over especially well, he might even rip off his T-shirt in the locker room, Hulk Hogan style, and watch his players go wild. You can do that sort of thing when you're strong as an ox. If he's not in as good of shape as he was when he anchored the North Alabama defensive line during the Lions' 1980 Gulf South Conference championship run, he's close. Now they were telling him he had a virus or something?

"Someone called me and said 'Coach Carter, you're going viral,'" said Carter, who graduated from UNA in 1981 in Health, Physical Education and Recreation. "I didn't even know what, going viral, meant."

Twelve thousand retweets. Nearly 50,000 likes. Nearly 5 million views and counting. That's what it meant. All within a few hours. All just because he changed a flat tire.

"He came in and told me, 'Man, that's the easiest one I've done,'" Cody Gross says. "He couldn't believe it."

Yes, that would be that Cody Gross, North Alabama legend Cody Gross, who quarterbacked the Lions to three straight national championships in the mid-90s. These days, Gross is the head

football coach at Athens High School, home of the Golden Eagles and, since March, home to Manly Monday. And he could hardly believe it himself.

"Well, it all started because I was wanting to be more intentional about how we reach our players, about developing them beyond football," said Gross, who earned his bachelor's degree from UNA in 1996 and a master's in 2003, both in secondary education.

In other words, teaching his boys not just football skills, but life skills. Maybe they could do it once a week? Maybe on Mondays, after practice?

With Coach Carter around, it would almost be a crime not to.

Gross and Carter have known each other for years, gone to church together, briefly coached together on the same college staff. In the summer of 2017, Carter was getting ready to hang up the cleats for good when he got a phone call.

"I was actually going to retire, but Cody talked me into coming on board here at Athens," he said. "I took the job and couldn't be happier."

Carter joined a staff actually comprised entirely of North Alabama alumni. Offensive coordinator and wide receivers coach Drew Phillips graduated in 2011; 2013 graduate and former Lions standout Will Furlong, a member of



UNA's most recent Team of the Decade, handled Athens' offensive line until leaving in July to coach running backs at the University of West Alabama.

Gross said he wanted Carter in charge of his defensive line not only because he knew football as well as anyone he'd worked with, but because of his character.

"Nobody wants to mess with him, but he's got a heart as big as Texas," Gross said.

And sure, having someone around to fix cars and tractors and lawnmowers and stuff wouldn't hurt, either.

"I'm telling you, Steve Carter may be the most interesting man in the world," Gross said. "He can do anything. He can fix anything."

Carter doesn't know about all that. "But," he said, "I have always kind of been mechanically inclined."

The first Monday lessons were pretty basic, though, and mostly to do

with making a good first impression. The boys couldn't leave the locker room until they'd mastered a firm handshake. Then there was the tie-tying tutorial. Essential stuff, but pretty basic.

It's when Carter started practically performing magic tricks like magnetizing screwdrivers and sawing PVP pipe without a saw – that's when Gross broke out his cell phone and introduced the internet to the most interesting man in the world.

"Manly Monday" with Coach Carter. This man can do ANYTHING. General plumbing tutorial. How do you cut PVC when you can't get a saw to it? Use some twine. Teaching life skills on Mondays."

Gross tweeted that out April 1.

"I just wanted to let people in our town know what was going on in our program," he said. "But I also wanted to video it so I could go home and do some of that stuff."

Carter, meanwhile, was completely oblivious. He doesn't talk to the camera in the videos. Just to his players.

"I didn't know he was even putting that stuff on Twitter," Carter said. "I didn't know how Twitter worked."

He still doesn't. But on Tuesday, April 30, both he and Gross got a crash course in what it can do.



Coach Steve Carter works along side Cody Gross, Drew Phillips and Will Furlong. All are UNA grads.

In this week's installment of Manly Monday Coach Carter teaches us how to change a flat tire.
#lifelessons #morethanfootball

It didn't take long.

Of course, everyone's a bit fuzzy on how exactly it happened. Gross had a decent amount of Twitter followers before things went crazy, probably around 2,500 or so, mostly friends and fellow high school coaches and fans who remember him scoring the winning touchdown with 10 seconds left to land the Lions their first national championship in 1993. He'd gotten a few "attaboy" and a little bit of attention on some of the earlier Manly Monday tweets. But none had gotten in front of a Twitter account with more than 1.6 million followers.

For whatever reason, the video of Gross' team watching Coach Carter changing the rear passenger side tire of his 2007 Toyota Camry after an afternoon workout did.

Barstool Sports, a sports culture lifestyle brand, isn't exactly known for wholesome content. On Twitter, they're occasionally downright bawdy.

Not that time.

In a world full of high school kids playing Fortnite, this football coach is teaching kids how to properly change a tire. #FootballGuy

"I don't know how they found it, but I guess if it gets in front of the right person it just kind of kicks in," Gross said. "One of our coaches had said something about Barstool Sports tweeting it. He said, 'Coach, I think it's about to go crazy.'"

It did. Gross was in meetings most of the next day, but it was hard to pay attention. His phone kept beeping. He put it on silent. It kept vibrating.

When he finally finished, he opened Twitter and did a double-take. Video licensing companies from New York to Switzerland were requesting permission to share and distribute the video. Among the dozens of congratulatory texts was one from his nephew telling him Heisman Trophy winner Reggie Bush had tweeted something about it.

For the next few days, not a day went by without a link to something on Manly Monday popping up in his inbox. Al.com, USA Today, sports blogs galore. Then came the interview requests.

A week after he went viral, Carter drove to Nashville for an appearance on Fox and Friends. A couple of days later,



a WHNT camera crew showed up at Athens Stadium to shoot footage that eventually wound up on *Inside Edition*.

"I'm pretty sure everybody wishes they had a coach and someone like him in their family to be able to teach them those things and to show that he cares and he wants you to be successful in not only football and life," junior Kevin Jurado told the station.

Going viral or whatever is great and all, but that's not the kind of response Carter and Gross are after, which is why they kept Manly Monday going even after their 15 minutes of fame. On the Monday before Mother's Day, Carter talked to the team about respecting women while showing them how to make a piece of jewelry for the special someone in their lives. He taught them how to plug a tire. He taught them how to make a chain out of rope. He taught them how to repair a lawn mower tire that's off its rim.

"It's just very much a surprise that this took off like it did," Carter said. "I'm glad people think what we're doing is a good thing. But it's a shame at the same time because people won't take time to show kids stuff like this anymore. When I was growing up, I had a dad who took the time to do it. But there are a lot of kids from single-parent families who don't have that, and it's kind of crazy that it's gotten to this point. I mean, there are

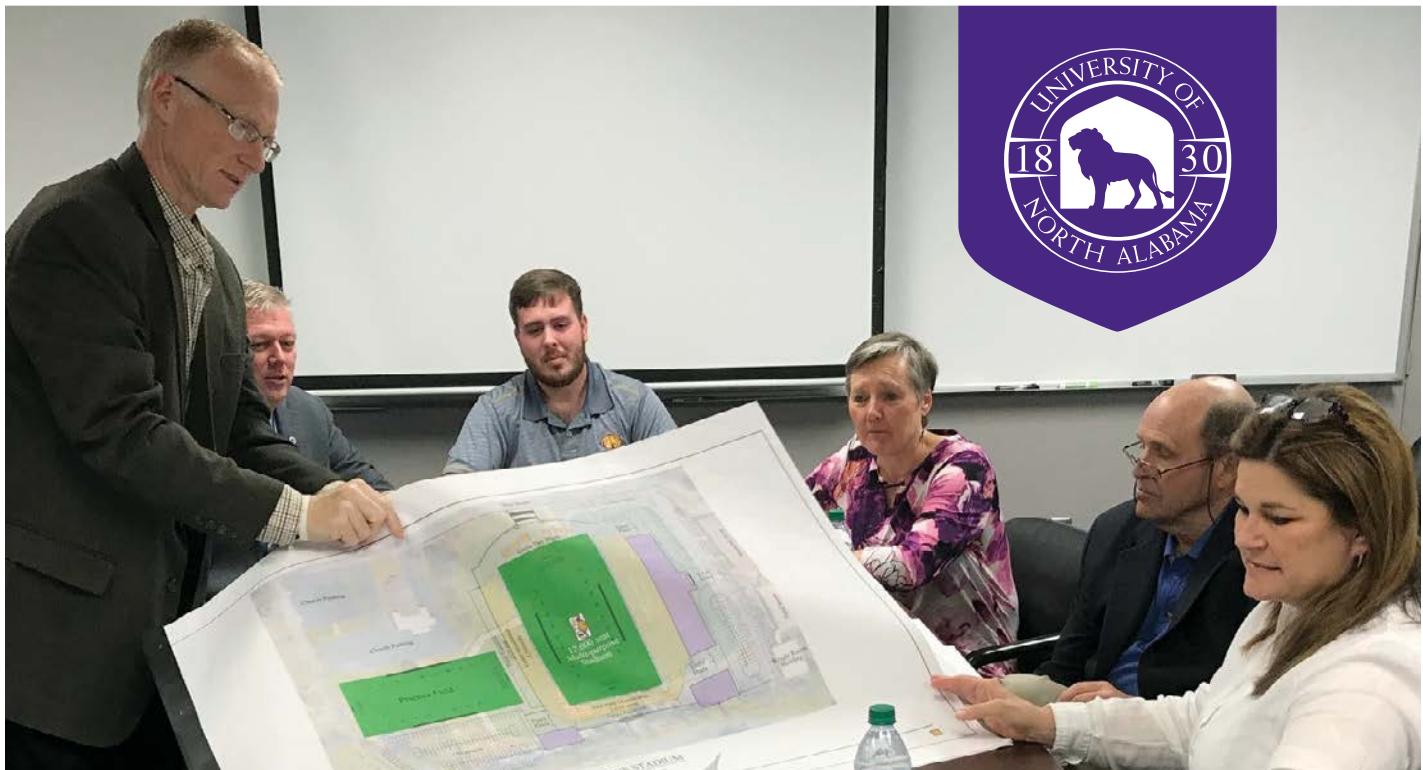
coaches who can't change the oil in their car. There are coaches who can't even check their oil, to be totally honest with you."

For the record, Gross says he can check his oil. But as for some of that other stuff . . .

"Oh yeah," Carter said. "I've fixed Coach Gross's car several times."



Athens High School football coach Steve Carter came out of retirement to work with the program.



UNIVERSITY STADIUM REPORT

It began with a question: Are you interested in the University exploring the possibility of an on-campus football/soccer stadium?

That one question came as a result of casual conversations among student leaders on campus, those who want to see UNA's own on-campus stadium come to fruition as well as those who believe that UNA has other priorities to pursue.

Then Student Government Association President Chase Holcombe decided that the real test would be to put that question before the entirety of the student population in the form of a survey. In November of 2018, he had his answer.

In his letter to President Kitts revealing the overwhelming positive response to the question, he said, even he was surprised at the outcome.

"Assuming the sample collected is random, we can assert with 99 percent confidence that at least two-thirds of students enrolled on campus would like to see the University explore this issue," he wrote.

Of the 1,778 students who participated, almost 1,300, or right at 71 percent, answered in the affirmative. Fifteen percent, or 271 respondents, said no, while 14 percent indicated indifference toward the issue.

From that response, along with the adoption of SGA Resolution 18-11 affirming the response, Holcombe pursued the matter with Kitts, requesting that a workgroup of individuals be created to determine the feasibility of a stadium, including cost and potential locations. In February of 2019, the University Stadium Workgroup, or USW,

was convened for its first meeting, and among its members was Holcombe.

"The entire process related to the stadium discussion, from the work of the SGA to the USW, has been student-centric," Holcombe said. "I'm proud to say that Dr. Kitts and the administration responded to the student response in the creation of the USW."

After the initial meeting in February, work for the USW began in earnest. A chair, former UNA professor Dr. Timothy Morgan, was appointed, and the group was tasked with addressing these questions:

1. What is driving student sentiment on this topic as expressed through the fall 2018 student survey and SGA Resolution 18-11? The USW may solicit input from other key stakeholder groups as it deems appropriate.
2. What is the norm for stadium ownership, location, and capacity in FCS-level programs in Alabama and in area athletic conferences? What are the norms for our aspirational peers in the FCS top 10 programs?
3. What are the risks involved with developing a UNA-owned and operated stadium? What are the risks involved with not doing so?
4. If UNA were to decide to build a stadium, what considerations should be used to determine location? What capacity and amenities should the stadium feature? What should be the approximate cost of such a facility?
5. What funding options could be explored to support development of a stadium? State-appropriated dollars should not be factored into this analysis.

Throughout the course of the spring and early summer, the work group met to consider each of these questions.

"Workgroup members were thoughtful, diligent, and did a wonderful job working through the charge of Dr. Kitts," said North Alabama Athletic Director Mark Linder, who also served on the workgroup. "They stayed on task and asked the hard questions throughout the process. With the Student Government Association leading the charge and the initial excitement of student leaders on campus, the possibility of a University-owned and -operated stadium has definitely energized the campus and the community."

The workgroup considered stadium size and location, looking at sites both on and off campus. The average stadium size for schools in the FCS top 10 programs has a capacity of 15,371. In the Ohio Valley Conference, of which UNA is a member, the size is just under that at 14,500. Cost, too, was factored in, and the price for constructing a stadium would hover in the \$25 million to \$30 million range.

Further, stadium uses were also discussed. Holcombe said a stadium would be the site for multipurpose events, such as band competitions, football and soccer games, Spring Fling, movie nights, and graduation.

In addition to regular workgroup meetings, Holcombe as well as workgroup member Grant Gunn conducted presentations



among key student groups, including fraternity and sorority life organizations, the SGA, and the LaGrange Society. There were also two open forums at which members of the community were able to ask questions and provide feedback.

"Both the fun topics, like stadium design, and tough topics, like funding, were discussed in these meetings," Holcombe said. "Overall, the response from these student groups was positive."

At the student forums, approximately 70 percent of the almost 300 individuals who attended said they would be comfortable with a \$12-per-hour stadium fee. Approximately 73 percent said they would be willing to pay a \$10-per-hour stadium fee, while 86 percent were comfortable with paying an \$8-per-hour stadium fee.

Based on these forums, the initial design and amenities – including additional on-campus parking – were favorably received. Attendees were also able to share their ideas, which have been documented and will be shared with an architect should the project move forward.

"The USW summed up these findings, as well as additional information from other research, in a report that has been submitted to President Kitts," Holcombe said. "At this time, the question is: 'What's next?' I think it's vital that a final vote be taken by students on the matter. This would be natural considering the student-centric nature of the progress on the issue thus far."





ATHLETIC HALL OF FAME INDUCTS CODY, KLUG, PRIDE, AND REGAN AS CLASS OF 2019

The 30th class of inductees for the University of North Alabama Athletic Hall of Fame has been selected and includes former student-athletes from the Lions' football, women's basketball, baseball, and men's golf teams.

The UNA Athletic Hall of Fame Class of 2019 includes women's basketball standout Renae Cody, baseball All-American Mike Klug, football standout Bobby Joe Pride, and men's golf All-American Justin Regan.

The group will be formally inducted into the UNA Athletic Hall of Fame in a ceremony at 9 a.m. on Saturday, September 28, as part of UNA's 2019 Homecoming celebration.

After its creation in 1990, the UNA Athletic Hall of Fame inducted four members each year through 2005. From 2006-2014 that number was expanded to six. Beginning in 2015, the induction class returned to four honorees per year.

This year's induction brings the total number of inductees into the UNA Athletic Hall of Fame to 138.

RENAE CODY

(Women's Basketball 1981-84)

Cody was a four-year member of UNA women's basketball teams from 1981-84. She was a member of UNA's 1982 AAIAW Northern Division Championship team under Gary Elliott and a member of UNA's first NCAA Division II Tournament team as a senior in 1983-84 under Wayne Byrd.

She was selected first-team All-Gulf South Conference in 1983-84. The Lions

had a combined 79-39 record in her four years in the program. She ranks as the fourth leading scorer in UNA women's basketball history with 1,294 points, all in the era before the three-point shot. She made 559 career field goals and 176 free throws in 118 career games. She still ranks as UNA's career leader in steals with 208 and is second in career assists with 477. Her top scoring game was 30 against Stillman in 1983-84.

A native of Red Bay, Ala., Cody scored 294 in 1980-81, 264 in 1981-82, 357 in 1982-83, and 379 points in 1983-84.

Cody has worked for the Central Service Association in Tupelo, Miss., for almost 34 years as a programmer and customer service representative. The company is a computerized information system service that serves the needs of public utilities across the seven states of the Tennessee Valley and other utilities outside the Tennessee Valley area as well.

MIKE KLUG

(Baseball 2004-05)

The starting second baseman on UNA baseball teams in 2004 and 2005, Klug was a two-time all-conference and all-region selection who went on to be named All-American in 2005.

Selected second-team All-GSC in 2004 and 2005, Klug was first-team All-South Region both years and a second-team Rawlings/ABC A Division II All-American pick as a senior at second base.

For his efforts in helping lead the Lions to the championship game of the

2005 GSC Tournament, Klug was voted GSC Tournament MVP. UNA lost in the championship game to West Alabama, but Klug became the first player from a non-championship team to win the tournament's MVP honors.

Klug helped lead UNA to a 34-20-1 record in 2004 and a 39-19 mark in 2005 under Mike Lane. He led the team with 76 hits, 70 runs scored, 52 runs batted in, 25 doubles, 37 bases on balls, and 14 home runs in 2005. He also led the Lions in home runs (nine) and triples (seven) in 2004 while hitting .353 with 61 hits, 53 runs scored and 43 RBI.

He earned one GSC Player of the Week award on April 20, 2004.

Klug had a career batting average of .358 (137-of-382) with 123 runs scored, 95 RBI, 39 doubles, 10 triples, and 23 home runs. He stole 44 bases in 50 attempts, walked 63 times and was hit-by-pitch 13 times. He finished with a .694 career slugging percentage and a .459 career on base percentage.

He was selected as UNA's Male Athlete of the Year in 2005 and was later drafted in the 28th round of the Major League Baseball Draft by the Oakland A's in 2005.

BOBBY JOE PRIDE

(Football 1968-71)

A four-year football letterman for the Lions from 1968-71, Pride was a member of the first integrated collegiate football team in the State of Alabama under Coach Hal Self. He finished his career with 3,655 all-purpose yards, which,

at the time (1971), was second best in school history behind his teammate Leonard Thomas (3,938). That mark still ranks eighth in school history. His career numbers include 854 rushing yards, 799 receiving yards, 1,525 kickoff return yards, and 477 punt return yards for 3,655 all-purpose yards. He scored seven career touchdowns, including two kickoff returns for touchdowns in his career – 67 yards against Jacksonville State in 1968 and 100 yards against Tennessee-Martin in 1970. The 100-yard return is tied for a school record.

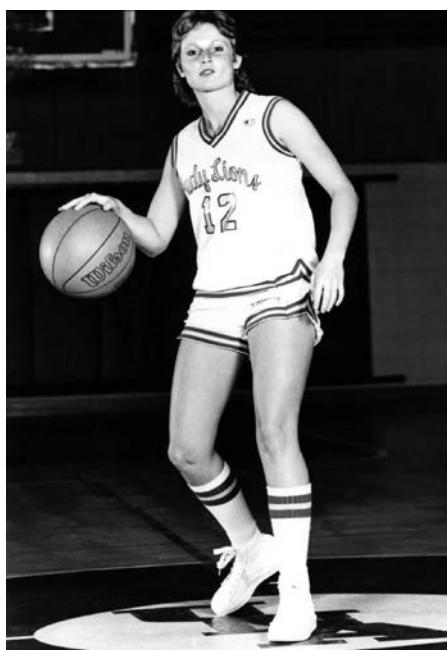
Pride led the team in kickoff returns in 1970 with 18 for 623 yards and a 34.5 average, and again in 1971 with 19 for 417 yards and a 21.0 average. His 623 kickoff return yards in 1970 set a school record that has since been broken. He had 1,106 all-purpose yards in 1970 with 177 rushing, 254 receiving, 623 on kickoff returns, and 52 on punt returns. He finished with 1,069 all-purpose yards in 1971 with 144 rushing, 417 receiving, 417 on kickoff returns, and 101 on punt returns.

Pride played wingback and tailback his first two seasons before moving to flanker. A 1977 UNA graduate with a Bachelor of Science degree, the Decatur, Ala., native was inducted into the Morgan County Sports Hall of Fame in 2018.

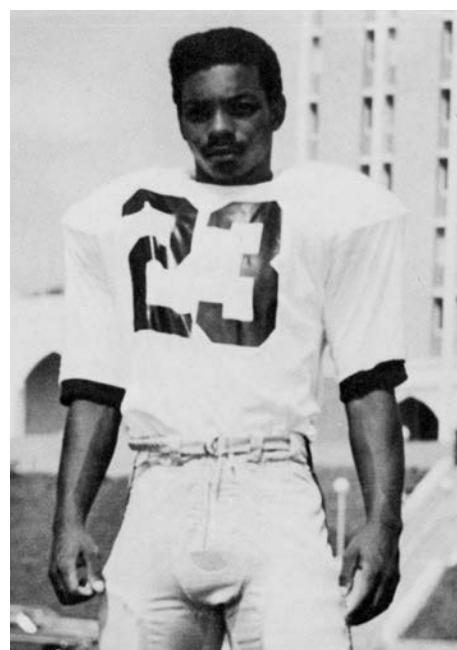
JUSTIN REGAN

(Men's Golf 2000-03)

A four-year letterman on the men's golf team at North Alabama from 2000-03, Regan received All-American recognition in three of his four seasons with the Lions and helped lead UNA to three NCAA Division II National Tournament appearances. He was first-team All-Gulf South Conference in 2000 and 2003 and second-team All-GSC in 2002. He earned All-South Region honors in 2003, was a second-team All-American in 2003 and an honorable mention All-American in 2000 and 2002. He also received UNA's Jack Karnes Award in 2000 for leadership, citizenship, athletic, and academic performance. He tied for 12th individually at the 2002 NCAA Division II Golf Championships, tied for 33rd in 2003, and tied for 47th in 2000. He helped lead UNA to back-to-back NCAA Regional championships in 2002 and 2003, including taking Medalist honors as region champion in 2003.



Renae Cody '84



Bobby Joe Pride '71



Mike Klug '05



Justin Regan '03

In all, Regan played in 36 tournaments for the Lions, winning six and posting 15 Top 10 finishes.

He becomes the sixth former UNA golfer to be elected to the Hall of Fame.

A first-team selection for the Gulf South Conference Team of the Decade for 2000s, Regan received a Bachelor of Business Administration degree from UNA.

Regan worked for 15 years after graduation as an account manager with Spectra Contract Flooring in Atlanta. He

has been in his position as Vice President of Sales and Operations for Spectra in Alabama for the last two and a half years.

He and his wife, former UNA cheerleader Carly Ingersoll, live in Birmingham and have three sons.

2019 FALL ATHLETIC SCHEDULES



SOCCER SCHEDULE

Date	Time	Opponent	Location
AUGUST			
30	7 p.m.	Chattanooga	Florence, Ala.
SEPTEMBER			
1	1 p.m.	Jacksonville State	Florence, Ala.
6	7 p.m.	Tennessee Tech	Florence, Ala.
8	1 p.m.	Alabama A&M	Huntsville, Ala.
13	7 p.m.	Abilene Christian	Abilene, Tex.
20	6 p.m.	Alabama State	Montgomery, Ala.
22	1 p.m.	Jackson State	Jackson, Miss.
26	7 p.m.	Florida Gulf Coast	Florence, Ala.
29	11:30 a.m.	NJIT	Florence, Ala.
OCTOBER			
6	NOON	Liberty	Lynchburg, Va.
10	6 p.m.	North Florida	Jacksonville, Fla.
13	11 a.m.	Jacksonville	Jacksonville, Fla.
18	7 p.m.	Stetson	Florence, Ala.
25	6 p.m.	Kennesaw State	Kennesaw, Ga.
27	1 p.m.	Lipscomb	Florence, Ala.
NOVEMBER			
<i>ASUN Tournament</i>			
1	TBA	ASUN Conference Tournament Quarterfinal	
3	TBA	ASUN Conference Tournament Semifinal	
9	TBA	ASUN Conference Tournament Final	

CROSS COUNTRY SCHEDULE

Date	Time	Opponent	Location
AUGUST			
30	6 p.m.	JSU Strut's Season Opener	Oxford, Ala.
SEPTEMBER			
7	8:30 a.m.	UNA Invitational	Florence, Ala.
21	9 a.m.	John McNichols Invitational	Terre Haute, Ind.
OCTOBER			
11	7:40 a.m.	FSU Invitational	Tallahassee, Fla.
18	9 a.m.	UAB Blazer Classic	Montevallo, Ala.
NOVEMBER			
2	9:30 a.m.	ASUN Conference Championship	Ft. Myers, Fla.



VOLLEYBALL SCHEDULE

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Opponent</i>	<i>Location</i>
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AUGUST

Belmont Bruiser Showcase

30	11:30 a.m.	Belmont.....	Nashville, Tenn.
30	4 p.m.	Arkansas State	Nashville, Tenn.
31	11 a.m.	Milwaukee	Nashville, Tenn.

SEPTEMBER

Samford Invitational

6	7 p.m.	Samford	Birmingham, Ala.
7	11 a.m.	UAB.....	Birmingham, Ala.
7	5 p.m.	Jacksonville State	Birmingham, Ala.

Chattanooga Classic

13	2 p.m.	Manhattan College	Chattanooga, Tenn.
14	1 p.m.	Tennessee Tech	Chattanooga, Tenn.
14	5 p.m.	Chattanooga	Chattanooga, Tenn.
17	7 p.m.	Tennessee State	Florence, Ala.

Beale Street Challenge

20	10 a.m.	Memphis	Memphis, Tenn.
20	4:30 p.m.	Southeast Missouri State ...	Memphis, Tenn.
21	10 a.m.	Toledo	Memphis, Tenn.
27	6 p.m.	Florida Gulf Coast	Fort Myers, Fla.
29	Noon	NJIT	Newark, N.J.

OCTOBER

4	6 p.m.	Liberty	Florence, Ala.
6	1 p.m.	Jacksonville	Florence, Ala.
8	7 p.m.	Lipscomb	Florence, Ala.
11	6 p.m.	Kennesaw State	Kennesaw, Ga.
18	6 p.m.	North Florida	Jacksonville, Fla.
19	5 p.m.	Stetson.....	DeLand, Fla.
22	6:30 p.m.	Lipscomb	Nashville, Tenn.
25	7 p.m.	Kennesaw State	Florence, Ala.
27	Noon	Florida Gulf Coast	Florence, Ala.
31	6 p.m.	Jacksonville	Jacksonville, Fla.



NOVEMBER

3	3 p.m.	Liberty	Lynchburg, Va.
9	Noon	NJIT	Florence, Ala.
15	7 p.m.	Stetson.....	Florence, Ala.
17	1 p.m.	North Florida	Florence, Ala.
21-23	TBA	ASUN Tournament	Top Seed Hosts



**PURCHASE YOUR SEASON TICKETS
256-765-5466 or online at roarlions.com**

UNA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

Derrick Chatman '08 President
Tosha-Paige Whitten '13 President Elect
Mary Leigh Gillespie '96 1st Vice-President
Susan Adams '80 2nd Vice-President
Christa Raney '97 Secretary
Raleigh Green '10 Treasurer
Gale Satchel '06 Club Advisor
Pat Roden '77 Faculty Advisor
Aaron Irons '99 Past President
Bishop Alexander '09 & '12 Alumni Director



message from the ALUMNI PRESIDENT

Dear Alumni and Friends,

"Start strong...finish stronger!" This quote reverberates deeply with me as I reflect over the past year and my tenure as alumni president. To say my tenure has been gratifying would be an understatement. To meet so many alumni who have the same common thread of their love for UNA never gets old!

I experienced many prestigious moments as your alumni president. I believe the pinnacle of these was the opportunity to speak at seven commencements, including our first ever summer ceremony. The opportunity to provide words of encouragement and formally welcome the graduates to the association has been rewarding.

The new school year is underway, and we are preparing a first-class Homecoming, to include our annual Alumni Awards Banquet that will be September 27th. Awards will be presented to a number of distinguished UNA graduates whose impressive and inspiring careers have earned them the respect and admiration of their fellow alumni. Your continuous support of this event and Homecoming is paramount for bringing back alumni of all ages.

As I conclude my term, I will proudly pass the presidential baton to someone whom I believe will exceed her own expectations. Our next alumni association president is an outstanding woman with a core passion to support and promote our treasured university. President-Elect Tosha-Paige Whitten is an excellent example and confirmation of the quality of alumni our university produces. She will continue to lead our alumni association down a path of prosperity and an expansion of engaged alumni.

I am beyond joyful when I think of the progression and growth we have made this past year. I'm proud of the "PRIDE" and eternally thankful for the blessing of serving as your alumni association president.

Roar Lions!

Derrick R. Chatman, PSP® '08

2018-2019 Alumni Association President



Dear Fellow Lions,

I am honored to serve as the newest UNA Alumni President. Each time I step onto campus, especially at Homecoming, I think of the ways the university has shaped my life. As I begin this journey with you, I consider why I wanted to get involved with the Alumni Board. My reasoning is simple: UNA has provided me with an exceptional education, a multitude of memories, and it continues to enrich my life today. It is my goal to continue the Board's efforts to affect the lives of the university's students and help alumni of all generations reconnect with our great alma mater.

As alumni, it is imperative that, when we are able, we volunteer our time, talents, and resources to support the university's efforts to innovate and evolve. Any level of involvement can help transform our university and further UNA's strategic mission. Whether it be through fundraising or just showing up to cheer on one of our many Lion teams, there are a number of ways that we can all be involved.

There are many opportunities to connect with your fellow alumni and the university. You can join us at our annual alumni summit, attend a local alumni chapter event, or reach out to the alumni relations office. I look forward to meeting many of you in the upcoming year! I can't wait to see what we can do together to continue to make UNA a stronger, louder, Lion pride.

Roar Lions!

Tosha-Paige Whitten '13

Alumni Association President

UNA ALUMNI CLUB LEADERS

ALABAMA

Birmingham • Chris Burrell '02
Shoals Area • Elaine Witt '76
Decatur/Morgan County • Zac '02 & Laura Richardson '03
Huntsville • Laurentis Barnett '03
Tuscaloosa • Jim Page '01

GEORGIA

Atlanta – Carnette Johnson '83

MISSISSIPPI

Central Mississippi • Mike Byers '79

TENNESSEE

Memphis • Coleman Barron '14
Nashville • Jamie Ellis '08

ALUMNI GROUP LEADERS

Band • Jeff McCrary '83
Geography • Jessie Baker '12
Social Work • Stacy Lee '01
Black Alumni • Nikki Durr '00
Young Alumni • Emily McCann '13



University of NORTH ALABAMA

2019 HOMECOMING

SEPTEMBER 27-28

REGISTER at una.edu/homecoming

Thursday, September 26

15th Annual Geography Alumni Conference 8:00 p.m.-3:30 p.m. • Wesleyan Hall

Friday, September 27

Jack Karnes Memorial
Golf Tournament 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. • Cypress Lakes Golf & Country Club
Campus Tours for Alumni 3:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m. • Office of Admissions • Coby Hall
15th Annual Geography Alumni Conference 8:00 p.m.-3:30 p.m. • Wesleyan Hall
Alumni Awards Banquet 6:00 p.m.-7:30 p.m. • GUC Banquet Halls
Homecoming Pep Rally 9:00 p.m. • Soccer Field

Saturday, September 28

Homecoming 5K 8:00 a.m. • Harrison Plaza
SGA Past Officers Breakfast 8:00 a.m. • GUC Loft
Athletic Hall of Fame Induction 9:00 a.m. • GUC Performance Center
UNA Honors College Coffee Social 9:00 p.m. • Wendell W. Gunn Commons • Starbucks
Homecoming Parade 10:30 a.m. • Downtown Florence
Tailgating Noon - 2:30 p.m. • Braly Stadium • Spirit Hill/Spirit Quad
Golden Lions 50th Reunion • Class of 1969 Noon • Rogers Hall
Lion Walk 12:45 p.m. • Braly Stadium • Spirit Hill
Pre-Game Show 2:20 p.m. • Braly Stadium • Florence
UNA vs Presbyterian College 3:00 p.m. • Braly Stadium • Florence

UNA NIGHT

at W.C. Handy Festival featured
THE KIRKMAN COMBO



University of NORTH ALABAMA

2019 HOMECOMING AWARD RECIPIENTS

Alumnus of the Year

John Paul White '99, originally of Loretto, Tenn., resides in Florence. White graduated with a Bachelor of Business Administration in Management with a concentration in Entertainment Industry Management.

Lifetime Achievement

John Thomas McGee '58, originally of Florence, resides in Chapel Hill, N.C. McGee graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics and Business Administration.

Community Service

Patsy "Pat" Davis Burney '88, has lived in Florence since 1976 and considers it her home. She graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Management.

Faculty/Staff Service

Kelly McGregor Ford '94, is from Florence. She graduated with a Bachelor of Science in English and Professional Writing.

Military Service

Col. William Riley Brewer, III '82, is from Killen. He graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Spanish with a minor in Management.

Political Service

Sen. Timothy Ivan Melson '82, is from Florence. He graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Professional Biology and General Chemistry.

Educator of the Year

David Brian Bailey '96, is originally of Albertville and resides in Florence. He graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Education (Mathematics 7-12, History 7-12) as well as a Master of Arts in Education (Mathematics 6-12).

Friend of the University

Anne Marie Howard is originally from Mobile and lives in Florence.

Registration for Homecoming is open, and alumni and friends of the University are encouraged to log on to una.edu/homecoming in order to reserve tickets to events, including the annual alumni awards banquet, which is scheduled for Friday, Sept. 27.

The winners will be recognized as part of UNA's annual homecoming events, which are scheduled to take place Friday, Sept. 27 and Saturday, Sept. 28.





UNA Derby Day 2019, hosted by President and Mrs. Kitts, at Turtle Point Yacht & Country Club on May 4 was a huge success! Together, we raised \$95,220. We could not have done it without the help of all of our sponsors, gift-in-kind donors, volunteers, and UNA Derby Day attendees. The money raised at UNA Derby Day helps fund a variety of student and faculty programs, research, scholarships, and more. Our heartfelt thanks to everyone who made this year's UNA Derby Day FUNdraiser a rousing success! Please save the date May 2, 2020, for our 8th Annual UNA Derby Day. For details about the event, visit una.edu/derbday.





GUNN appointed to BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Dr. Wendell Wilkie Gunn recalls the Civil Rights movement and the signing of the Act vividly.

"I remember that time well," he said, from his home in Stamford, Conn. "The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 were great examples of bi-partisan cooperation, supported by substantial majorities in both the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives, as well as both of the major political parties."

As a young man from Tuscumbia, Ala., the decision to attend Florence State

was one driven by location and cost. To do that, he would need to transfer from Tennessee State, in Nashville. It would also mean enrolling at a university in a deeply segregated southern state.

"When the news reports came out that I had applied to Florence State College, I received several unpleasant phone calls," Dr. Gunn said. "But, once I enrolled, the calls stopped. Amazing!"

Dr. Gunn made history then, and he has made it once again this year when he accepted the appointment to UNA's Board of Trustees by Alabama Gov. Kay

Ivey. He will be the 12th member of the University's governing body.

"I am honored by this appointment and will be seeking ways to work with Dr. Kitts and the other trustees on the principal mission of UNA, which I assume will be the delivery of a world-class education to UNA students, with the maximum affordability, consistent with target quality," Dr. Gunn said. "I also believe that UNA has a unique and compelling history of accomplishment and change that needs to spread beyond its immediate community. I intend to be instrumental in this endeavor."

The appointment comes amid the 55th anniversary of the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which took place one year after Dr. Gunn enrolled at UNA. He is the first person to have integrated an Alabama university and later become a member of its governing body.

"Dr. Gunn is making history at UNA, and this is truly a monumental step for the University," said Gov. Ivey. "When appointing Dr. Gunn to serve on the Board of Trustees, I knew that he would exemplify the honesty and integrity that I seek in our candidates. I appreciate Dr. Gunn's willingness to serve the state in this capacity."

UNA President Dr. Ken Kitts, who presided over the naming ceremony of The Wendell Wilkie Gunn Commons dedication in 2018, sees this appointment as bringing Dr. Gunn's history with UNA full circle.

"I know of no other example out there where a student entered under the circumstances that he did, went on to graduate, and then returned to join the institution's governing body. This is truly full circle for Dr. Gunn," Pres. Kitts said. "We welcome him to our Board of Trustees. These are the individuals who collaborate and come together to set the vision for the University. Dr. Gunn is ideally positioned for this assignment by virtue of his temperament, intelligence, and experience."

When Gunn sought admission to UNA in 1963, he was represented by noted civil rights attorney Fred Gray. Attorney Gray had represented Ms. Rosa Parks and Dr. M. L. King in the Montgomery Bus Boycott. He successfully represented Vivian Malone and James Hood, who entered the

University of Alabama, also in 1963. In fact, lawsuits filed by Gray helped desegregate more than 100 local school systems, as well as all public colleges and universities in Alabama.

Of the Gunn case, Gray said that it was "the easiest civil rights case I ever had."

"I am extremely happy that Dr. Gunn has been appointed to the UNA board," Gray said. "And I am overjoyed and proud of what this says about the University of North Alabama itself. Of all my many clients, Dr. Gunn is the first to be appointed to the governing board of the institution that he helped desegregate."

His early days on campus were quiet, unmarred by the protest and violence that had plagued other college campuses across the southeast.

"During the first few months I was on campus, the other students and I hardly talked to each other," Dr. Gunn said. "Looking back, I suppose it was because we just didn't know what to say to each other. In the spring, when I won the physics achievement award, I received a standing ovation. Everyone stood up and cheered. Wow! Finally, I was just another student. That's all I wanted."

Through the lens of the 50-plus years that have passed since Dr. Gunn's matriculation through the University, he said he feels a deep fondness for UNA. He credits his UNA experience with preparing him to cross the multiple cultural lines that he encountered throughout his career.

"Looking back at my time at Florence State and the fifty-plus years that have followed, it is clear that I was supported by the school," he said. "I received great recommendations from my professors when I applied to graduate school at the University of Chicago. I received handwritten letters of congratulations from (Florence State) President Norton whenever I received a promotion in my career. Putting these things into perspective, it is clear that Dr. Norton and the administration were prepared for me before I arrived in 1963. They didn't know who I was or where I would come from, but they were ready to make my entry successful and peaceful. The rest would be up to me."

After graduating from UNA, which was then known as Florence State, in

1965, with his chemistry degree, Dr. Gunn pursued his education at the University of Chicago. He has worked as a finance professional, vice president at Chase Manhattan Bank, and assistant treasurer at PepsiCo. He also served in the White House as a senior advisor, Special Assistant for International Trade, to President Ronald Reagan.

Dr. Gunn returns to Florence and the Shoals regularly, often spending time on campus and visiting with friends and family. He is frequently invited by student organizations to speak and answer questions about his time at UNA, his business career, and his government service. In 2017, he was the commencement speaker, and it was at the ceremony that he was awarded an honorary doctorate. He has also addressed campus during the annual fall convocation.

"When I go to UNA now and walk about the campus, I watch how students interact with each other, across all cultural lines, and it seems as if the old barriers were never there. And my heart sings," Dr. Gunn said. "Even better, I see the same interactions in the community around UNA, whether in the grocery store or when I am in a restaurant for lunch. I have to believe that the University has had, and continues to have, a powerful positive impact on the entire Shoals community."

Often on these visits, Dr. Gunn spends time with Pres. Kitts, much as he did when E.B. Norton occupied the same space on the first floor of Bibb Graves Hall.

"He told me after the Homecoming parade, 'You know, Ken, years ago, I started coming back around the University. I've always liked it, and I've always been grateful for the education I received here. Now, I have really fallen in love with my alma mater.'" Kitts said. "It's this University that he carries in his heart. Even with all of the other stops in his high-flying career, from the University of Chicago to the White House, it's the time he spent at UNA that continues to resonate with him."



SMITH appointed to BOARD OF TRUSTEES

In April, the Alabama Senate confirmed Gov. Kay Ivey's appointment of Andalusia business executive Gary L. Smith to the University of North Alabama Board of Trustees. Smith replaces First Metro Bank President Rodney Howard, of Muscle Shoals, whose term expired after 11 years of distinguished services on the University's governing board.

Smith graduated from UNA in 1976 and received his juris doctorate from Samford University's School of Law in 1979. He has been president and CEO of PowerSouth Energy Cooperative since January of 2000. Headquartered in Andalusia, Alabama, PowerSouth is the second-largest utility provider in the state and distributes electrical power to 39 counties in Alabama and in 10 counties in northwest Florida. Smith's term on the Board of Trustees extends through September of 2024.



UNA Alumnus Recipient of PRESIDENTIAL EARLY CAREER AWARD for SCIENTISTS and ENGINEERS

Dr. Martin Heimbeck, a 2006 graduate of the University of North Alabama, is one of two recipients from Alabama of a 2019 Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers.

He was nominated by the Department of Defense for his work in Huntsville at Redstone Arsenal for the CCDC Aviation and Missile Center.

The award, or the PECASE as it is known, was established in 1996

and is the highest honor bestowed by the United States Government to outstanding scientists and engineers who are beginning their independent research careers and who show exceptional promise for leadership in science and technology, according to the release from the White House.

Heimbeck received the award as part of a formal ceremony in July in Washington, D.C., and it's based on his research on terahertz radiation, the region between microwave and infrared waves.

"It has properties that can see through certain materials, like opaque plastics, nondestructively and provide information about them, to see if there is any damage to the interior structure," he said.

"This technology can be applied to composite materials, which are of high strength but of low weight, used on helicopters, so that we can see any defects in the structure before they can lead to failure. It's analogous to X-rays we use to look at our bones."



UNA Alumna NAILS IT on Popular Netflix Reality Show

It wasn't Emily Cook who made the first contact with producers of the popular Netflix reality television show "Nailed It." It was her sister. In fact, the University of North Alabama alumna never really saw herself – or her baking skills, for that

matter – as up to the challenge of a show like "Nailed It."

Not too long after that initial email, however, Emily found herself having a Skype interview and submitting a nine-minute video of her cooking an Easter cake that she would then take to her grandmother's house in Myrtle, Miss., where Emily lives.

"I guess it all started in March of 2018, and, by the middle of June, the producers had called to tell me they wanted me on the show," she said. "It was a fast process. They wanted me to fly out to Los Angeles, and they filmed our episode over three days. It was a cool experience to film a TV show, one I never thought I would have."

Each episode of "Nailed It" features three home bakers with a terrible track record taking a crack at re-creating edible masterpieces for a \$10,000 prize. While the projects don't always come out looking like their inspiration,

whichever amateur baker comes closest to a successful dessert by the end of the episode takes home the cash. Comic and actress Nicole Byer, along with renowned pastry chef Jacques Torres, host the culinary competition. "Nailed It" is in its third season on Netflix.

Along with the prize money, Emily also got bragging rights of being called the "Nailed It" champion. And while she's not exactly sure what she plans to do with her prize winnings, she said the \$10,000 could help cover her student loans for the history degree she earned while at UNA. She graduated in December of 2018.

"I am thinking about teaching high school and then getting my Master's in history to, potentially, teach at the college level," Emily said. "But looking back on the experience, I would say I'm a better baker because of it. I now know that hot water can be used to fix a lot of things, such as melting better for buttercream icing."



UNA Alumnus REMAKES HIT "I Want It That Way" for 20th Anniversary

It's been 20 years since couples slow-danced to the Backstreet Boys' record-breaking single, "I Want It That Way," and it's considered the group's signature song. When the band surprised fans recently by releasing a new version of the record-breaking single, it wasn't produced or released by their record label. Instead, the re-recorded single and new sound is credited to a small-town, two-man team in northwest Alabama: Grammy-winning producer/songwriter Gary Baker and recording and mixing engineer Chris Bethea.

Bethea, a 2007 graduate with a Bachelor of Science in Music, is based in Florence and has been mixing tracks professionally for more than 10 years. Although the "I Want It That Way" single introduces Bethea to the mainstream pop industry, he has worked with Baker on a number of other projects for various artists as well as his own projects, mixing for artists, including Percy Sledge, Prime Circle, Penny & Sparrow, Brett Eldredge, and Sleeping at Last.

"Living in a small town in Alabama, people are sometimes unsure of what to expect from me professionally," Bethea said. "I have worked with all kinds of artists, from varying genres and backgrounds. My experience has forced me to evolve and continue to grow as I take on new challenges at every level. But, whether it's recorded in a big studio or just in someone's bedroom, my goal remains the same: to capture the artist's vision and deliver the best possible production."

Baker, who is best known for writing several hit songs, including the 1994 hit "I Swear," and many of the Backstreet Boys tracks from previous albums, calls Bethea a "sonic genius."

"I have never been disappointed with anything he has done," Baker said. "The industry would benefit from his unique expertise, and I know his career is only really just beginning."

Baker is a long-time friend of the Backstreet Boys, so, when the group's members personally asked him to recreate their most successful single, he immediately tapped Bethea to record and remix it.

"I knew it was going to be huge," Baker said. "And I would have never let anyone other than Chris work on it. The guys trusted me with their biggest hit, and I trusted Chris with the hardest part, positive he would get it right. This project would not have turned out the same without him. He nailed it."



LIONS take to the race in the 2019 BOSTON MARATHON

From the *TimesDaily*

Justin Waston said for several years he has two marathons in mind he wanted to one – run to qualify for the Boston Marathon and, two, the Boston Marathon itself.

"It's always been on the bucket list for sure," he said.

Watson, a senior at North Alabama, qualified at the 2017 Rocket City

Marathon, and, earlier this year, he completed the 2019 Boston Marathon. He was one of four runners from northwest Alabama to compete.

Jeremy Provence, the UNA cross country coach, had the

best time of any of the local runners at 2 hours, 41 minutes, and 25 seconds. It earned him 442nd place overall, 412th among men, and 352nd among men in his age group.

Watson finished in 2 hours, 54 minutes, and 25 seconds.



CLASS NOTES

1960s

Dr. Nelda Hicks

Cambron-McCabe '69

spent more than 35 years at Miami University of Ohio as a teacher and administrator, where she retired as Professor Emeritus. She lives in Muscle Shoals and will join the UNA Foundation board as a director in October.

1970s

Joseph Wayne Higgins

'71 retired after 48 years of service with the city of Florence. Mr. Higgins served 36 years as an educator and 12 years as a museum curator.

John Henry Morris '73

retired in April of this year from the Department of Homeland Security. John has served the public in various positions leading up to his retirement.

Melissa J. Long '79

has served as Assistant United States Attorney in Memphis, Tennessee, and Mobile, Alabama, and as the Chief Assistant District Attorney in Baldwin County, Alabama. She has been the Associate University Attorney at the University of South Alabama Health in Mobile since 2015. She will join the UNA Foundation Board as a director in October of this year.

1980s

Daniel Murphy Davis '81

retired from International Paper in January of this year.

Perry W. Heatherly

'81 retired from Hexcel Corporation after working there for 24 years.

Shane Caldwell '82 of Nashville, Tennessee, has been a producer at Country Music Television since 2002. Before that, he was a professional actor and comedian.

Fred Ellis Riley '82 retired after teaching and coaching for 37 years. He finished his career at Davidson High School in Mobile where he was the Head Football Coach for 14 years.

Kevin Davis '84, of Savannah, Tennessee, is in his fifth term as Mayor of Hardin County.

Dr. Stephanie Wagoner Teichmiller '84, from Decatur, operates her own dental practice and serves as an assistant professor in the School of Dentistry at the University of Alabama in Birmingham. She will be joining the UNA Foundation Board as a director in October.

Maurice D. Stafford '86 was inducted into the Mississippi Association of Community and Junior Colleges (MACJC) Sports Hall of Fame.

Dr. Chris T. Hamilton '87 retired from Athens City Schools after working in public education for 36 years.

Bryan Scott Lovelace

'87 was named Northwest Alabama Regional President of CB&S Bank.

Dr. Graham L. Sisson, Jr.

'87 currently serves as the Assistant Attorney General with the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services. He is also the executive director for the State of Alabama Governor's Office on Disability and the ADA Coordinator for the State of Alabama, and he is an adjunct law professor at Auburn University. He will join the UNA Foundation Board of Directors in October.

Karla Anne Johnson '89

was named West Madison Elementary School's Staff Member of the Year.

1990s

SGM (R) Christopher

David Jones '90 retired from the United States Army in October of 2018.

Dan D. Barger '93 retired from the city of Florence as the Treasurer/Chief Accountant in 2018.

Kindra Larissa Moore

Smith '95 accepted a position as Principal at Riverwood International Charter School.

Phillip Brandon

Bridgmon '96 has accepted a new position as provost and vice president for Academic Affairs at the University of Central Missouri.

Sherie Dawn Norton '98

accepted a position as a family nurse practitioner at Primary Care Clinic in Ripley.

W. Shannon Olive '92

has been hired as the Chief Accountant of the City of Florence and subsequently appointed as the Treasurer and Chief Financial Officer for the City.

2000s

Derrick A. Mills '00

is a law partner with Marsh, Rickard & Bryan, P.C. in Birmingham. He is a past president of the Magic City Bar Association. In October, he will become a director of the UNA Foundation Board.

Michael "Steve" Stephen

Winkle, Jr. '01 and Ashley Diane Ott Winkle '02 were selected for the Franchise Business Review's 2019 list of "Rock Star Franchise Owners." They own Office Pride of the Shoals. They recently opened Office Pride of Birmingham-Homewood, a second franchise location.

Eve Rhea '02

became the new executive director of development at Auburn University at Montgomery.

Katrina Denise Brown

'05 won the Gail K. Johnson Outstanding Attorney Award.

Jason W. Morgan '08

was appointed Dean of Business and Finance at Calhoun Community College.

John Bruce Watwood

'08 was named Senior Vice President for the Southeast Group of Motion Industries.

Connie Leigh Geimer,

FNP-BC '09 has taken a position as a nurse practitioner at Floyd Primary Care in Piedmont, Alabama.

Bryan Lee Pigg '09

accepted a position as Elkmont High School's band director.

Jeremy Gray Woods '09 opened FaithVenture Media in 2017. He is now opening a children's home in Romania with his wife, Magda.

2010s

Dr. David Charles Stauffer '10 earned his Doctor of Education in Leadership and Management from St. Thomas University.

Sarah Ann Emerson '11 graduated from Samford University Cumberland School of Law in May 2018. She passed the Alabama Bar and started working as an Assistant District Attorney.

Kodi Steven Chandler '12 was promoted to an Agent within the William Morris Agency's Nashville, Tennessee, office.

Benjamin Todd Skipworth '12 produced Chris Janson's "Drunk Girl" music video. The music video took the 2019 ACM Awards trophy for Video of the Year. Benjamin is only 29 years old and has worked with Darius Rucker, Brad Paisley, and George Strait.

Brianna Lynn Locke Sistrunk '13 was crowned Mrs. Alabama United States 2019.

Anna Owens Melton '14, former UNA softball player, opened Powerhouse Athletics with former UNA baseball player, **Corey Dylan Boston** who attended UNA from 2012 to 2015.

Robert "Robby" Bret Thompson '14

received his Juris Doctor degree from the University of Alabama School of Law in May 2019.

William "Will" Larry Gieske '15 became a Lauderdale County Assistant District Attorney.

Lindsey Richell Shirley '16 was named Ticket Sales Manager of the Elizabethton Twins, a minor league baseball team of the Appalachian League and a rookie-level farm club of the Minnesota Twins. The Elizabethton Twins are based in Elizabethton, Tennessee.

Oscar Darnell Dothard '17 has a new position as an accountant at Willis Towers Watson.

Christopher Allen Sparkman '17 accepted a position as an AR Coordinator in the W Squared division of LBMC, an accounting and business consulting firm.

Chloe Michelle Brownell '19 serves as a Graduate Assistant at the University of North Alabama in the Office of Alumni Relations.

Johnathan Taylor Crosby '19 accepted a position at the Cardiovascular Intensive Care Unit at Huntsville Hospital.

Nicholas Smith '19 has begun his graduate studies at Auburn University and is a staff member in the First Year Experience Office.

FRIEND OF THE UNIVERSITY

Bill Matthews is a native Tennessean, who has lived across the country throughout his life, from New Orleans to Maine to California. He served almost six years in the United States military, splitting his time evenly between the Navy and the Army.

Mr. Matthews graduated from high school in Loretto, Tenn. He then matriculated to Vanderbilt University in Nashville, where he earned High Honors in Sociology. He then enrolled in the University of Tennessee, where he completed his Master's degree in planning, specializing in city, state, and regional planning.

His work life has centered on state government, especially in community and economic development, municipal planning, and, most recently, in continuing education at the university level.

During his more than 15 years of retirement, Mr. Matthews has discovered two new passions in his life: hiking in Europe, which has taken him more than 2,000 miles across

the continent and allowed him to visit more than eight countries; and the Singing River Sculpture project, an initiative that honors the musical heritage of Muscle Shoals. Based on his love of travel, he has given more than \$25,000 to UNA so that students may also travel and study abroad.

His only child, Mason Matthews, is a graduate of the UNA geography department and a part-time photographer for the UNA athletic department.

Mr. Matthews plans to spend his 80th birthday in November hiking in Ireland with his son.

In a class by themselves, The Friend of the University Award honors those who promote the mission of the University by donating their time, resources, and energy. Their work is a labor of love. They're patrons, silently seeking to select deserving causes and special interests where they can share their expertise and passion.

Correction from the University of North Alabama Magazine Spring Issue.

UPDATE YOUR RECORDS

Have you won an award, changed jobs, earned a promotion or completed another degree?

Your UNA classmates would like to know more about it!

Send us your news, and we will publish it in a subsequent issue of the University of North Alabama Magazine.

Office of ALUMNI RELATIONS

UNA Box 5047, Florence, AL 35632-0001
alumni1@una.edu • una.edu/alumni

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

DOUGLAS JOHNSON '83



Doug Johnson is a self-described country boy from Elgin, Ala., a small, close-knit community in north Alabama with one traffic light at the crossroads of highways 72 and 101. He grew up singing and playing the piano in his church, learning early that his passion lay in performing. Attending college 20 miles down the road at the University of North Alabama may have seemed convenient and an easy choice, but it was one of the biggest decisions of Doug's young life.

The decision, however, proved life-changing.

At UNA, Doug flourished as he participated in numerous theatrical productions and was a performer in the SOAR (summer orientation) Cabaret productions. Majoring in dramatic arts, speech and music, his experiences at UNA paved the way for a journey that eventually took him around the world.

"I was fortunate to have two mentors as a student, Robert Allen Holder, a faculty member of theatre at UNA as well as Jack Martin, the advisor of my fraternity, Sigma Chi," Doug said. "Both men made me realize I could not only have big dreams, but I could work hard to see those dreams become reality."

And work hard.

After years of creating entertainment productions across the country, Doug is now president and executive producer of a company he established, *Entertainment*



Doug Johnson, a 1983 graduate of the University of North Alabama, has made a career out of entertaining others. Large scale productions are his specialty.

Plus Productions, which is based in Los Angeles. He is the creative director for numerous productions that include national television network shows, Disney, theatre and entertainment performances in Las Vegas as well as other places around the globe, celebrity functions, and everything in-between. Virtually every day around the world



people are being wowed by one of his productions.

Doug credits much of his success to his small-town, southern upbringing.

"The traits of southern hospitality and southern charm instilled in me at a young age and nourished during my time at UNA made me stand out once I left the comforts of home," he said. "Raising my wings to fly high in large, metropolitan cities and around the world took guts, but I was ready. I've truly been living the dream!"

Doug makes his home in Los Angeles with his husband, Ken Shepski, and their two four-legged children, Baxter and Sophie.

Where Are They Now? is a standing feature in the *University of North Alabama Magazine* that highlights alumni doing great things in the world.



IN MEMORY

1940s

Josephine Davis Martin '45

July 7, 1922 - June 16, 2019

Betty Jean Varnell Carter '49

July 20, 1929 - September 20, 2018

1950s

Martha Faye Pettus Bynum '51

June 13, 1928 - May 25, 2019

Cynthia Allen Kimbrough Burrows '52

January 20, 1931 - March 15, 2019

Dorothy Sandlin Goodwin '53

April 12, 2019

Nona Eloise Davis Livingston '53

March 12, 1931 - June 16, 2019

Clyde Harrison Roberts '55

April 17, 1930 - March 11, 2019

Thomas "Tommy" Jefferson Pirkle '56

September 8, 1929 - April 18, 2019

Euel Lamar James '57

February 9, 1934 - May 30, 2019

Rev. Dr. Doyce Walton Gunter '58

March 8, 1935 - May 22, 2019

1960s

Virginia Ann Fitzgerald White '60

August 28, 1938 - August 21, 2018

Douglass Bennett Roberson '61

November 18, 1935 - November 12, 2018

John Weldon Childress '62

August 31, 2018

Jack Sharkey Redwine '64

March 9, 1929 - May 24, 2019

Jeffrey Mark Edwards Sr. '64

October 12, 1941 - July 22, 2019

Mauveline Elaine Faulkner '66

September 7, 2018

Bonita Yvonne Mathews Spencer '67

August 31, 1944 - June 6, 2019

Charles McConnell Hubbert '69

May 26, 1935 - March 28, 2019

James Thomas Johnston, Jr. '69

November 4, 1947 - April 28, 2019

1970s

Charles Victor Gray '70

November 21, 1944 - May 8, 2019

James Leslie Couch '71

January 8, 1949 - December 25, 2018

Robert Jerry Weatherby '71

July 20, 1940 - April 3, 2019

Michael Ernest Hardin '72

March 13, 1949 - May 22, 2019

Helen Tomlinson Young '73

May 25, 1941 - April 5, 2019

Brenda Aycock Long '74

June 7, 1940 - April 3, 2019

Charles Lawson "Chuck" Greer, Jr. '76

June 12, 1953 - April 8, 2019

Terrell "Terry" Buntyn Rochester '76

May 24, 2019

1980s

Cynthia Ann Johnson Smith '80

May 13, 1953 - August 30, 2018

Sandra Crenshaw Ford '82

October 17, 1943 - June 14, 2019

Jeffery Louie McIntyre '83

August 10, 1961 - June 2, 2019

Rebekah Louise Curtis '87

July 29, 1965 - April 3, 2019

Kay Lynn Creekmore Newell '89

October 5, 1953 - May 7, 2019

1990s

Brenda Fowler Blanton '92

July 1, 1948 - April 25, 2019

Robin Lynne Scott Zimmerle '94

June 3, 1950 - April 7, 2013

Regina Wells Van Devender '95

December 14, 2018

2000s

Donald "Trey" Ponsonby Kyle '10

October 15, 1986 - May 7, 2019

Dr. McDaniel William Ubi '10

October 9, 1987 - January 26, 2019

FRIENDS OF THE UNIVERSITY

Lola Lee Creel Aune

September 13, 1915 - September 17, 2018

William Clay "Bill" Deal

October 11, 1939 - January 7, 2019

George W. Hamner

May 18, 1935 - November 21, 2018

John Rutledge Dyer

January 9, 1961 - March 16, 2019

Veva Elizabeth Beck Free

January 12, 2019

Martha Sue Koonce Landers

May 29, 2019

Nicholas Martin Martelli

July 26, 1955 - May 10, 2019

Steven Earl Thompson

October 7, 1949 - April 1, 2019

Kathryn Boyd Rice

December 25, 1921 - April 5, 2019

Thomas Harvey Shoemaker

November 30, 1940 - March 19, 2019

William R. Simmons, Sr.

1932 - September 19, 2018

Rayburn Alton Wisdom, Sr.

March 27, 2019

FACULTY AND STAFF

Dr. Joe B. Copeland, retired

June 21, 2019

Dr. Max Dillon Gartman, retired

1938 - July 17, 2018

Dr. Robert Truman Smith, adjunct

April 1, 2019

EXCERPTS *from the* ARCHIVES



State Normal School summer of 1923

The University of North Alabama is on the cusp of a few significant milestones, not the least of which is the bicentennial of the institution in 2030. As the oldest four-year university in the State of Alabama, this is no small thing. It's also a distinction about which we take pride and plan to celebrate. As we build up to this 200th anniversary, there will be other events along the

way, including a Founders' Day event in 2020 on the University's 190th birthday. This was at a time when, among its numerous monikers, UNA was atop LaGrange Mountain in Colbert County and known then as LaGrange College. There's more to come, and we know you'll want to be a part of each event, large or small. Stay tuned!



State Normal School in 1912



Graduating Class of 1912



O'Neal Hall in 1816



The Library in Bibb Graves Hall in 1930

Leo and Una NEED YOU!



Save the Dates!

Haunted History of UNA Ghost Walk Tour • Thursday, October 17 – half of the proceeds go to the lions!

Lion Sponsorship/Guardian of the Lions • monthly opportunities for sponsorship/giving

Lion Giving Day • Monday, November 18

una.edu/lions



Office of University Advancement
University of North Alabama
UNA Box 5113
Florence, Alabama 35632-0001

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una.edu/homecoming

FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

Date	Time	Opponent	Location
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AUGUST

29	7 p.m.	Western Illinois	Florence, Ala.
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SEPTEMBER

7	8 p.m.	Montana	Missoula, Mont.
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14	6 p.m.	Alabama A&M	Florence, Ala.
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21	6 p.m.	Jacksonville State	Jacksonville, Ala.
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28	3 p.m.	Presbyterian	Florence, Ala.
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HOMECOMING

OCTOBER

5	1 p.m.	Hampton	Hampton, Va.
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19	6 p.m.	Charleston Southern	Florence, Ala.
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26	TBA	Kennesaw State	Kennesaw, Ga.
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NOVEMBER

21:30	p.m.	Campbell	Florence, Ala.
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9	11 a.m.	Monmouth	West Long Branch, N.J.
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16	TBA	Gardner-Webb	Boiling Springs, N.C.
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